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# Lake Geneva & Its Literary Landmarks

by

Francis Gribble

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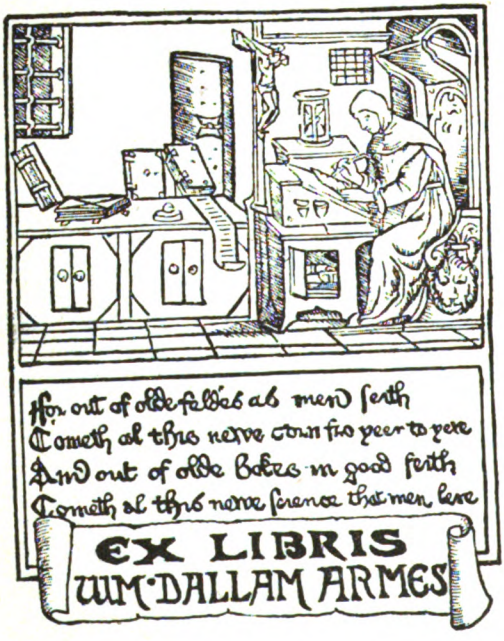


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LAKE GENEVA

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# PARIS, GENEVA AND ITS LITERARY LANDMARKS

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# LAKE GENEVA AND ITS LITERARY LANDMARKS

BY

FRANCIS GRIBBLE

*Author of "The Early Mountaineers."*

WESTMINSTER
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# PREFACE

A preface is an author's opportunity of explaining that he does not represent his book to be anything that it obviously is not.

My book, then, does not claim to be what an historian would regard as a complete history of Geneva. Such a book ought to be written, but I have not tried to write it, because the task affords too many opportunities of being dull and tedious.

Nor is my book put forward as a complete history of Genevan literature. Readers who desire such a history can read French; and in French there is M. Philippe Godet's admirable *Histoire littéraire de la Suisse Française* which covers the ground more than adequately.

What I have tried to write is an informal, anecdotal history of Geneva, with especial reference to the careers of the many eminent men of letters, natives or strangers, who have lived or sojourned there. Every continental traveller — and we are all continental travellers nowadays — finds his way sooner or later to Geneva; and it occurred to me that such travellers might be glad of a book which would remind them of what was most worth remembering about Bonivard, Calvin, Beza, Voltaire, Rousseau, Madame Necker, Madame de Stael, Horace Benedict de Saussure and other celebrated men and women, whether citizens or resident aliens, whose names are associated with the City and the Lake. So far

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as I am aware, nothing of the sort exists in English. That seemed a sound reason for trying to fill the gap.

My acknowledgments to previous writers on the same subject, in the French language, are mostly made in the text or in footnotes. Here I should like to record a special indebtedness to the book of M. Philippe Godet, already mentioned, to the admirable monographs on Madame de Warens by M. François Mugnier and M. Albert de Montet, to Marc Monnier's witty and learned *Genève et ses Poètes*, and to the various publications of the Genevan Historical Society.

FRANCIS GRIBBLE.

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**ADHEMAR DE FABRI, BISHOP OF GENEVA.**

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

# CHAPTER I

## ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF GENEVA—RELATIONS WITH SAVOY—THE CONDITION OF THE CITY BEFORE THE REFORMATION—THE LIFE OF THE CITIZENS—CULTURE AND THE ARTS—TWO EARLY DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES

THE curtain rises, revealing Geneva as a City where true religion and sound learning flourish and abound, towards the middle of the sixteenth century. Before 1535 it is merely a place on the map like another. From 1550 onwards, it is a centre of vigorous intellectual life, rich in illustrious names and memorable literary associations. The transformation was rapid and complete, and needs to be accounted for.

In a measure, no doubt, we may find the explanation in the powerful genius of Calvin—a born schoolmaster if there ever was one—who, at the critical moment, took the town in hand, proceeded to govern it as though he were not quite sure whether he was in charge of a University or a Reformatory. But Calvin's influence, while it explains much, requires a good deal of explanation in its turn. Exceptional conditions were obviously needed to make his very drastic discipline at once salutary and acceptable; for the rule is that a well-ordered community does not need a dictator to supervise its morals, and that an ill-conditioned community will not put up with one. Yet Geneva, in the sixteenth century, not only needed a disciplinarian, but bore



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with him, though his hand was heavy. How did this come about? To answer that question we must look back and try to penetrate the mystery that wraps the early annals of the City. Here, as elsewhere, the dark ages hold the secret of the dawn of civilization.

The first historian who mentions Geneva is Julius Cæsar. He speaks of it as the last town in the territory of the Allobroges, whence one could cross a bridge, and enter the territory of the Helvetii. Just then, however, it was the Helvetii who wished to cross the bridge, in order that they might emigrate, with their wives and families and goods and chattels, into Gaul; and Cæsar threw up a rampart, sixteen feet high and five leagues long, to bar their path. They tried in vain to get over the river on rafts, and at the various fords, and ultimately came round the other way, through the passes of the Jura. The great commander, having hurried home for reinforcements, met the invaders near Lyon, defeated them in battle, rolled them back into their own country, and duly noted the events in his admirable Commentaries.

This was practically the beginning of Roman rule in Switzerland. How far it eventually extended may be seen by a glance at the map in Dr. Dändliker's History of Switzerland. Roughly speaking it encircled the country, leaving the centre—the neighbourhood of Thun, for example, and of the Lakes of Zug and Lucerne—comparatively free and independent. From Geneva a road ran all along the North bank of the Lake, past Nyon *(Noviodunum)*, Lausanne *(Lausonnium)*, Vevey *(Vibiscum)*, and Villeneuve *(Pennilucus)*, and for a considerable distance up the Valley of the Rhone,

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communicating, by a path over the Great St. Bernard (*Summus Pœninus*) with Aosta (*Augusta Prætoria*). Other roads, starting from Lausanne and Vevey, led, by way of the lakes of Neuchâtel, and Morat, and Bienne, to Solothurn, Basle, and Zurich; while from Zurich one could travel past the Lake of Wallenstadt to Coire, and thence across the Grisons, and over the Splugen into Italy. Inside the circle thus described—a circle dotted with many prosperous towns—there were many scattered Roman dwellings—the rustic homes of time-expired legionaries; but, if the Romans penetrated to the neighbourhood of the actual centre of the circle, at all events they did not settle there.

The Roman dominion lasted about 450 years. We need not trouble ourselves with its vicissitudes, but merely note that, though Basle was built, as a frontier fortress, at the great bend of the Rhine, as late as 374, the triumphant incursions of the barbarians began only a generation later. In 406 we find the Alemanni driving the Romans before them almost as far as the Grisons. In 443 we find the Burgundians concluding a treaty with the Romans, which gave them possession of "Sabaudia"—a territory comprising Savoy as far as the Lake of Geneva, Lower Valais, and the South Eastern part of Vaud. In the meantime, however, Geneva had been twice razed to the ground,—first by the Ostrogoths, and then by Attila, the Scourge of God. Gondebaud the Burgundian rebuilt the City.

At this point we nearly lose our way in the gloom of the dark ages, but it is still possible to disentangle and set forth the leading facts. After the Burgundians came the Franks, who defeated them at Autun in 532, and, soon

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afterwards, made the Merovingian Empire supreme in Switzerland; but they, in their turn, yielded to the Carlovingians, with the result that, in 800, Switzerland was an integral part of the Empire of Charlemagne. Charlemagne died, however, in 814, and his empire fell to pieces. Burgundian Switzerland came into the hands of the Guelf family, and Rudolf I became King of a dominion including the Jura, the Lake of Geneva, and the Alps. This also was only a temporary arrangement. The development of the German Empire caused a fresh shuffling of the cards which it would be tedious to follow in all its details, but of which the net result was that Geneva owned a certain shadowy allegiance to the German Empire, but was, for practical purposes, detached from that, as from all other political conformations.

These stormy circumstances were clearly unfavourable to the prosperous growth of towns. Yet, in one way or another, the towns managed to grow up, and even, in a mild way, to flourish. Some of them, like Fribourg, were formally founded by the Zähringen and other great feudal lords. Others, like Lausanne, Sion, and Geneva—the third Geneva that rose from the ashes—developed as the appenages of bishoprics.

The most uncompromisingly Protestant historians have admitted that many of the early Bishops of Geneva were enlightened men, disposed to do their best for the town as well as for the diocese. Their principal enemies were the Dukes of Savoy, who claimed, as Comtes des Genevois,[1] to exercise

[1] The rights of Comte des Genevois were added by Oddo de Villais to Amadeus VIII, Count of Savoy, in 1401. The Count of Savoy was raised to the dignity of Duke in 1417.

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certain rights over the City, and these they successfully resisted by diplomatic representations at the Court of the German Emperor. At the instance of Bishop Ardutius, Barbarossa admitted their claims to independence, under his own lordship, at the Diet of Spires, in 1153; and all the claims of Savoy were expressly cancelled by a bull issued from Prague by Charles IV, at the instance of Bishop William of Marcossay. Other Bishops, again, encouraged the citizens in their aspirations towards self-government. The Franchises de Genève—the Magna Charta of Geneva—were published by Bishop Adhémar de Fabri in 1387, and created a species of *imperium in imperio* in the City. It must he added, however, that some of the Citizens thus enfranchised were in favour of the House of Savoy, and that the claims of that House, far from being withdrawn because the German Emperor had cancelled them, were asserted with more and more vehemence and violence as time went on, and that it happened occasionally that the Bishop himself was the Duke's nominee. The result is as pretty a political jumble as is to be found in history; and though the documents exist for following the changes in the situations from day to day, it seems sufficient to enumerate the factors.

Roughly speaking, then, the factors in the situation at Geneva, in the century or so preceding the Reformation, were as follow: First we have the Duke of Savoy, sometimes ceremoniously welcomed in the City as a distinguished stranger, and sometimes actually residing there, but at other times intriguing, or even fighting, to obtain a foothold within its walls. Secondly we have the Bishop, sometimes supporting the citizens against the Duke, and sometimes in

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league with the Duke against the citizens. Thirdly we have the citizens themselves, divided into two hostile factions: the Mamelukes who favoured the House of Savoy, and the Eidgenossen (whence the word Huguenots) who stood firm for independence. Finally we have the States of Berne and Fribourg, at one time regarding the Genevans as the subjects of the Duke of Savoy, with whom they were at war, and threatening to sack their City unless they paid a ransom, and at other times concluding alliances with them, and protecting them against the Duke's encroachments.

The result of these complicated rivalries is a confusion bewildering to the student. Fortunately only a few salient events of the period concern us, and these we will disentangle in due course. For the moment it is enough to note that the confusion was terminated by a war in which Geneva and Berne were allied against Savoy. The Duke had conquered the Canton of Vaud, but the allies drove him out of it. His last garrison resisted stoutly in the Castle of Chillon; but the soldiers blockaded the fortress on the land side, while the entire Genevan navy, consisting of four boats, bombarded it from the Lake. It fell in 1336, and, chained to a pillar in its deepest dungeon, the conquerors found François de Bonivard, the famous Prisoner of Chillon of Byron's poem, whom they bore back in triumph to the City for whose liberties he had suffered.

And here our summary of early Genevan history—the tedious but indispensable clearing of the ground—may end. With Bonivard—the first of the Genevan historians and the founder of the Geneva public Library—the long list of the literary landmarks of Geneva properly begins. His story

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must be told at such length as the available materials permit; but before we come to it, we may pause and try to draw ourselves a picture of the Geneva of those early times.

The first essential fact that one must lay hold of for this purpose is the population. Geneva had 5,800 inhabitants in 1346, 6,490 in 1404, and 12,500 in 1545. We may take it that the increase bringing it up to the last figure took place largely in the comparatively tranquil times of Calvin. It follows that the pre-Reformation Geneva was a place mid-way, in size, between Bideford and Barnstaple,—a little larger than Sandwich, and about as large as Deal. This is important to remember. It is amazing that so small a town should have played so great a part in history—though one's astonishment may be moderated by the recollection of the parallel case of Athens. But, on the other hand, much of what is most remarkable in Genevan annals—the success, in particular, of Calvin's astounding hierarchy—only becomes credible when we recollect that whatever happened there happened on a very small scale, and that we are discussing the vicissitudes of a City as compact as Sandwich, and very little bigger.

What Geneva looked like at this period we can tell, to a certain extent, from a print of the year 1561, preserved in the British Museum. The greater part of the town—including all the important public buildings—was on the right bank of the Rhône. But there was also a smaller Geneva on the left bank; and the two portions of the City were united by a bridge, taking the Island on its way. The bridge itself was a crowded street of houses, just as our own London Bridge used to be. Roofs of red tile—the red

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tile that we associate with the old castles of the Zähringen —gave the picture its prevailing colour. The cathedral, dating from the eleventh century, was red-roofed, and so were the majority of the private houses. All round the City ran a wall, with bastions, gabions, moats, drawbridges, and strong gates that were zealously guarded by day, and carefully locked at night. From the wall one looked out over absolutely open country as far as the bridges over the Aar, and further. The only out-lying building was the Pest House—a building which any enemy might be relied upon to spare, not, indeed, from humanity, but from the same instinct of self-preservation which caused the ministers of the Reformed faith, with one honourable exception, to refuse to visit it in 1545. On the side of the Lake, the City was also effectively protected from assault. A row of stakes, connected by heavy chains, made it impossible for the navy of the Duke of Savoy or any other enemy to rush the harbour.

So much for the view from without. If we may trust our print, it was a picturesque and clean view. The views within the city were equally picturesque, but not so clean. Narrow streets predominated, though there were also a certain number of open spaces—notably at the markets, and in front of the Cathedral, where there was a traffic in those relics and rosaries which Geneva was presently to repudiate with virtuous indignation. One can form an idea of the appearance of the narrow streets, by imagining the oldest houses that one has seen in Switzerland all closely packed together—houses, at the most, three storeys high, with gabled roofs, ground floors a step or two below the level

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of the road-way, and huge arched doors, studded with great iron nails, and looking strong enough to resist a battering-ram. Above the doors, in the case of the better houses, were the painted escutcheons of the residents; and crests were also often blazoned on the window-panes. The shops too, and, more especially, the inns, flaunted gaudy sign-boards, with ingenious devices. The Good Vinegar, the Hot Knife, the Crowned Ox were the names of some of these; their tariff is said to have been five-pence a day for man and beast.

The streets, being narrow, were also very generally crowded, and were particularly crowded in the evenings. From the stuffy houses—and even in these days of sanitation a really old Swiss house is sometimes stuffy enough to make the stranger gasp for breath—the citizens of high as well as low degree sallied to take their pleasure in the streets. The street was their drawing-room. They stood and gossiped there; they sat about on benches underneath their windows. Or some musician would strike up a lively tune; and ladies of the highest position in Society—the daughters and wives of Councillors and Syndics—attired in velvets and silks and satins, would dance round dances in the open air. For all their political anxieties these early Genevans were, on the whole, a merry people.

But—let there be no mistake about it—they made merry in the midst of filth and evil smells. On this point we have unimpeachable information in the shape of a rescript issued by the Chapter of the Cathedral, after conference with the Vidomme and the Syndics. The Chapter complains that too many citizens dispose of their slops by carelessly throw-

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ing them out of window, and establish refuse-heaps outside their front doors—a noisome practice which still prevails in many of the Swiss villages, though no longer in any of the Swiss towns. It is also complained that nearly every man has a pig-sty, and lets his pigs run loose in the streets for exercise, and that there is an undue prevalence of such unsavoury industries as the melting of tallow, and the burning of the horns of cattle. One can imagine the net result of this great combination of nuisances. In a city of magnificent distances it might have passed; Bayswater, at the present day, lives in ignorance of the smells of Bermondsey. But in Geneva, when Geneva was almost as small as Sandwich, one can understand that the consequences were appalling to the nostrils of the polite. The fact that the City was so over-run with lepers and beggars that two lazar houses and seven *hôpitaux*—or casual wards as one might say—had to be provided for their reception, adds something, though not perhaps very much, to this unpleasant side of the picture.

Our ecclesiastical rescript further proves that while the Genevans were a merry and a dirty, they were also an immoral, people. It records that they are unduly addicted to the game of dice, and that the outcome of this pastime is, "fraud, deception, theft, rapine, lies, fights, brawls, and insults, to say nothing of damnable blasphemy;" and it ordains that any man who "swears without necessity," shall "take off his hat and kneel down in the place of his offence and clasp his hands, and kiss the earth"—or pay a fine of three half-pence if he fail to do so. Then it proceeds to propound an elaborate scheme for the state regulation of immorality, forbidding certain indulgences "to clergymen as

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well as laymen; and requiring the Social Evil to wear something in the nature of a scarlet letter to distinguish her from other women.

Our business here, however, is not with these matters, but with the progress of culture and the arts. That progress was neither brilliant nor rapid; but the old records nevertheless contain scattered indications of gradual advance. In 1213 we read that Bishop Pierre de Sessons "established a doctor to teach the young ecclesiastics"; before that period it seems to have been a matter of accident whether "young ecclesiastics" got any suitable instruction or not. In 1378, Emperor Charles IV proposed to found a Genevan University; but the citizens objected, fearing that the behaviour of the students would not be conducive to tranquillity. Not until 1425 did they accept, from Bishop François de Versonnay, a school for the teaching of grammar, logic, and the other liberal arts. Other interesting dates are 1407, when the Genevans cast themselves a bell for their Cathedral; 1415, when we hear of a painting, still preserved, of the adoration of Christ by the Kings—a painting in which the outlines of the Salève, the Mole, and the Voirons, can be recognised; 1473, when the Hôtel de Ville was embellished with stained-glass windows; and 1480, when a similar decoration was introduced into the Cathedral.

A still more important date is 1478. In that year, Adam Steynschawer of Schweinfurt set up the first printing-press at Geneva, and issued three books from it: *Le Livre des sains Anges* by François Ximenes, *Doctrinal de Sapience* by Guy de Roye, and *Histoire de la Destruction de Troye*, by Guido Colonna. Other printers followed his example at

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short intervals: Louis Cruse in 1479, Simon de Jardin in 1480, Jacques Arnollet in 1490, Johannes Fabri (of Turin) in 1491, and Jean Bellot (of Grenoble) in 1498. But the printers need not detain us. The authors of their books were not Genevans, and did not write of Genevan affairs. The real evidence of the development of Genevan culture—such as it was—is to be found in the records of the dramatic entertainments organised for the diversion of the Dukes of Savoy on their visits to the City.

Presents as well as amateur theatricals were expected by the Dukes on these occasions. A list of the oblations of the year 1483 will show the nature of this tax. They consisted of:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Barrel of Malmsey. | 1 | Cask of white wine. |
| 3 | Jars of spiced wine. | 1 | Cask of red wine. |
| 24 | Candles. | 100 | Measures of oats. |
| 12 | Boxes of preserved fruit. | 200 | Florins to be distributed among his servants. |

A play of some sort was given on the same occasion, and we learn that the actors got six florins to divide between them for their services. In 1485, when Charles of Savoy and his wife Blanche de Montferrat visited the City, we read, in the official register, that "The Council exhorts the Councillors and two others to enact some elegant histories in the Rue de Notre Dame." But the only representation of the kind of which it is possible to give a complete account, is that given in honour of Beatrice of Portugal, wife of Charles III, Duke of Savoy, in 1523. This time, the

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only presents of which we hear were offered by the citizens to their Bishop and comprised:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Plates. | 12 | Wax candles. |
| 6 | Porridge basins. | 12 | Boxes of sweetmeats. |

The ceremony prefaced by these useful gifts proceeded thus:

At the bridge over the Arve, four mounted Syndics met the Duchess, and escorted her toward the City, holding a white silk canopy over her head. At Plainpalais, a further deputation of five leading citizens awaited the *cortège*. Their leader, Jean Philippe, attired in a magnificent silk suit, with silver facings—for which he had paid fifty crowns—delivered an address of welcome, in doggerel verse which may be rendered into doggerel English thus:

"Oh! mighty dame of high renown,
We bid you welcome to the town;
Marshalled in orderly array,
We trust you will be pleased to-day.
For all of us desire to be
Your humble servants as you see;
We'd serve you, knowing well your worth,
Sooner than any Queen on earth."

That was all. The reciter had finished, and the *cortège* passed on. It had not got far before it met a deputation of the leading ladies of Geneva. There were three hundred of them, and they all wore their most glorious apparel—lace caps with gold fastenings, gowns of brocaded satin bordered with velvet, and white shoes with bright silver buckles. They too had their leader, or captain, who delivered a poetical address; and, indeed, poetical addresses were

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the order of the day. At the Porte de la Corraterie, at the Chapelle de Notre Dame du Pont, at the corner of almost every street, a fresh poet—usually attired in some allegorical costume—awaited the arrival of the distinguished visitor. Here was a Sibyl, there was a Lady of Renown, there was an Apollo with a train of Muses; and each of these masqueraders in turn expressed his or her sentiments in verse. The procession stopped and attended to every one of them; the formula "taken as read" not having been invented in these early times.

These recitations, however, were only the beginning of the day's diversions. The *clou*—to use a modernism—of the entertainment was a Mystery Play, depicting certain notable episodes in the career of the Roman Emperor Constantine. The play was in six acts, and each act was given on a separate stage, at Bourg de Four; the noble spectators moving from one open-air theatre to the next, during the *entr'acte*. But the acts were short, and the plot can easily be summarised.

In the first act, which consists of exactly twelve lines, Constantine is promised that, if he can find the true Cross, he shall conquer all his enemies in that holy sign. The second act contains no dialogue, but only action; Constantine engages in mortal combat with the King of Persia and slays him. In the third act, Constantine describes his Christian exploit to his mother. For Act IV, the scene shifts to Jerusalem; Constantine calls upon the Jews to identify the true Cross for him, and the Jews decline, and are sent to prison for their contumacy. In Act V, Constantine distinguishes the true Cross from two others by the fact that

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it enables him to restore a dead man to life. In Act VI, Constantine and his mother kneel at the foot of the true Cross, engaged in prayer.

So far as one can judge, the whole performance, allowing for *entr'actes*, must have been over in about three-quarters of an hour; yet it is recorded that Duchess Blanche was bored by it, and had not either the tact or the politeness to conceal her lack of interest. Whereupon the proud citizens of Geneva murmured. They were not receiving the Duchess, they said, as their sovereign, but as their friend and equal; and this was want of manners. Some of them, moreover, went so far as to point out that theatrical entertainments cost a great deal of money, and that it would have been better to spend that money on the fortification of the City, against the day when the Duke of Savoy should try to enter, not as a guest, but as an enemy, with an army at his back. In the midst of that gay and festive scene, in short, disloyalty to the House of Savoy was in the air.

Another kind of dramatic entertainment which enjoyed popularity at this period was known as the *Sottie*. Nothing precisely like it is to be found anywhere nowadays; but it may be described as a satire, in form of allegory, on the topics of the day,—the medieval original, perhaps, of the *Revues* that flourish nowadays, in the Parisian theatres, at Christmas time. The particular Sottie on which we will fix our attention was given at Geneva in 1524. It was presented in the week of the Geneva Fair, and was a thoroughly popular performance, organised without reference to either Duke or Bishop, for no higher purpose than the amusement of the citizens by the citizens. The leading character was

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a certain *Père Bontemps*, who personified what we should call the *Good Time Coming;* and the drift of the piece is sufficiently expressed in the following scrap of dialogue between the *Physician*, and the *World*:—

*Physician.*

So that is what upsets your mind?
And you are not upset to find
Church benefices bought and sold
By hungry thieves in quest of gold?
Or babies on their mother's knee
Appointed to a Bishop's Fee?
While haughty Churchmen, as they please,
The goods of any neighbour seize,
And go to war on small pretext—
Whereby all Christian men are vext.

*The World.*

From Luther's land these plaints arise;
We're told they are a pack of lies.

*Physician.*

Whatever the abuse you ban,
They call you, now, a Lutheran.

And so forth. The Sottie was short but pungent. Though the Duke and Duchess of Savoy were in the town at the time, they did not go to see it. "No seats," we read, "were retained for them, and they were not invited." Perhaps it was as well for their peace of mind that they were not. Had they been present, it would have been made painfully clear to them not only that the Genevans were getting tired of the House of Savoy, but also that they were beginning to exercise the right of private judgment concerning the methods of the Bishop of Rome himself.

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THE DUKE OF SAVOY.

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THE DUKE OF SAVOY.

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## CHAPTER II

### TROUBLE WITH THE DUKE OF SAVOY—THE CASE OF FRANÇOIS DE BONIVARD—HIS FIRST IMPRISONMENT—HIS RELEASE—HIS PRIVATE WAR—HIS IMPRISONMENT AT CHILLON—HIS RESCUE

It has been mentioned that the Genevans settled their differences with the Duke of Savoy by allying themselves with the citizens of Berne and Fribourg. In accordance with the jovial spirit of the times, the conclusion of this alliance was celebrated by a fresh display of amateur theatricals. The following were the orders issued by the Council for the ceremonious reception of the ambassadors.

"Ordered that the Syndics go to meet them as far as Paquis, on horse-back, carrying their staves of office, and accompanied by all the citizens who are in a position to ride; that all the artillery of the town be brought down to the banks of the Lake to fire and salute; that a banquet be prepared in the Town Hall to regale the visitors on Monday evening; that every man make a point of cleaning his doorstep; and that a comedy be got up, to be played before the ambassadors, at their supper."

The alliance cemented by these festive demonstrations was formally renewed in 1531; and then yet another Comedy was commissioned, the Treasury being empowered to pay whatever was necessary for its production. As in 1523, the play was allegorical in character. A hen with a brood of



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chickens stood for Geneva; the House of Savoy was represented by a murderous company of kites. The kites demand the unconditional surrender of the poultry run; the hen defies them, pointing out that she has powerful defenders. It was as accurate a presentment as any one could wish for of the political situation of the hour.

From 1526 onwards we find the Genevans treating the Duke of Savoy more and more cavalierly every day. In that very year he announced his intention of visiting them, and they passed a resolution to the effect that he would not be allowed to enter the town because he "never came there without playing the citizens some dirty trick or other." When, a little later, he instructed them to send representatives to confer with him on the subject of the spread of Lutheranism in the City, the Council resolved that "he shall not be written to, nor shall envoys be sent to him, for we are not his subjects, but the bearer of his letter shall be given the verbal answer that we are satisfied with the condition of affairs and that it is no business of the Duke's to inform us." At the same time it was decided that the fortifications should be repaired, one member of every household lending a hand for the purpose; and this was done with such effect that when the Duke attacked the City he was repulsed, and when he attempted a pacific blockade, the Genevans invaded his own territories to forage. Finally Berne came to the help of Geneva with seven thousand men, and Chillon fell, and Savoy ceased, for a period to be aggressive.

It certainly was high time that a check was imposed on the Duke's encroachments. Though Geneva preserved its

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independence—and one stalwart Syndic carried his public spirit to the point of hitting the Duke's Treasurer over the head with his official staff—the Duke was fairly successful in wreaking his vengeance on individuals who objected to his rule. There was Jean Pécolat, whom he put three times to the rack, and then hung up by a rope in order that he might laugh at him while he was eating his dinner. There was Philibert Berthelier, whom he put to death on evidence extracted by torture from two of his friends who were also executed. There was Levrery who suffered the same fate, and went to his death repeating Latin Verses.

*Quid mihi mors nocuit? Virtus post fata virescit.*
*Nec cruce, nec saevi gladio perit illa tyranni.*

There were many other nameless patriots whose flesh was torn with red-hot pincers, or who endured the punishment of the estrapade. Lastly, there was François de Bonivard, the Prisoner of Chillon, whose fame has outlived that of all the others.

According to the writers in the encyclopædias, and similar authorities, the reputation of Bonivard has suffered from the researches of modern historians; but we must not allow ourselves to be carried away by their eloquence. Bonivard was a scholar and a gentleman; he played the part of a patriot when it was obviously to his interest to play that of a courtier; he paid for his patriotism with two long terms of imprisonment; and when he got his liberty he never posed as a martyr, but sat down and wrote a most interesting history of the City for which he had suffered, with hardly a reference to his sufferings. It will not be denied

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that this is a record worthy of respect, and the respect felt for it need not disappear because one antiquarian has grubbed up the statement of claim of an innkeeper who had to sue the Prisoner of Chillon for the settlement of his account for board and lodging, and another has drawn attention to an entry in the Register of the Council to the effect that "François de Bonivard, having been guilty of an act of impropriety with his domestic servant, is forbidden to have her living in the house any longer." On the contrary, it is at once more human and more just to take the view of his contemporaries who, with Calvin there to guide them, thought so little of this last peccadillo that they conferred the freedom of the City upon its author, only a fortnight after its occurrence.

Let us tell the story therefore, without prejudice, extenuating nothing. It will be the more interesting for being told with candour; and Bonivard's fame need not seriously suffer from the admission that he was not exempt from every human weakness.

Born at Seyssel, in 1493, Bonivard entered, at a tender age, upon the peaceable enjoyment of a sinecure. At seventeen, he succeeded his uncle as Prior of Saint Victor—a large monastery, long since demolished, situated to the East of Geneva, on the site where now stand the Russian Church, and the hotels of the Rue Charles Bonnet. It was a position with a sufficient salary, and no duties to interfere with the enjoyment of it. Bonivard seems to have spent the salary wisely, on his education. He studied grammar at Pignerol, and law at Fribourg and Brisgau (where he also learnt German); and visited Chambéry, Turin, and Rome.

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Of his doings in these places we have little information; though at Rome he seems to have taken due note of the ecclesiastical abuses of the period.

Preferment in the Roman Catholic Church, he has pointed out, in one of his books, was not in those days, the reward of religion or sound learning; a surer way of attaining to it was to murder some one obnoxious to an important prelate—or, failing that, to minister to such a prelate's pleasures, doctor his horse, or look after his hawk.

These, however, were the profound reflections of maturity. In his youth, though Bonivard may have remarked the existence of ecclesiastical abuses, he also acquiesced in them, profited by them, and thoroughly enjoyed them. His own position, indeed, as a layman, innocent of any intention of taking holy orders, drawing the revenues of a valuable benefice, was a glaring ecclesiastical abuse; yet it was a position to which he clung tenaciously, and for the loss of which he felt himself entitled to ample compensation. Nor is there any evidence that, while he held this ecclesiastical office, he conducted himself with the austerity of a reformer. On the contrary, though the brethren of St Victor may have occasionally prayed, fasted, and otherwise mortified the flesh, their Prior does not seem to have done anything to encourage them in such religious exercises. The only rule that we know him to have laid down for their guidance in life is a rule to the effect that every new monk admitted to the convent should entertain the other monks at supper.

Frivolity of disposition and a keen appreciation of good cheer were not, however, in Bonivard's case any more than in the cases of Alcibiades and Bolingbroke, incompatible

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with a serious interest in politics. He joined the *Children of Geneva*—a group of youthful conspirators against the Duke of Savoy, who plotted over their cups, and swaggered about with cocks' feathers in their hats, carrying their lives gaily in their hands. Bonivard used to entertain them at dinner every Sunday, and after dinner they used to organise torch-light processions, and march about shouting "Vivent les Eidgnots!" and other seditious cries. It was a perilous amusement, as the more serious among them knew well enough. "I warn you," said Phillibert Berthelier to Bonivard, who seemed to him to be regarding the conspiracy too much as a practical joke. "I warn you that this is going to cost you your liberty, and me my life."

The prediction was fulfilled in 1519. In that year, the Duke of Savoy visited Geneva for the purpose of calling his enemies to account. The Bishop, John the Bastard—he was the bastard of an ecclesiastic by a prostitute—assisted him cheerfully in the execution of his schemes of vengeance. On his way to the City he arrested two young Genevans, tortured them until he had forced them to make statements compromising to Bonivard, and then cut off their heads and stuck them on poles near the bridge over the Arve, with the inscription "*These are the heads of the Genevan Traitors.*" Entering the City, he sent his Vidomme—who was also the managing director of the principal disorderly house in Geneva—to arrest Berthelier; and when Berthelier refused to ask his pardon for his actions on the ground that he owed him no allegiance, he had him beheaded, at the foot of Cæsar's tower, on the island in the Rhone, where a mural tablet still keeps his memory alive.

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Fearing a similar fate for himself, Bonivard disguised himself as a monk, and left Geneva, attended by two friends, the Seigneur de Vaulruz, and the Abbé de Monthéron, who promised to escort him to a safe asylum at Echallens, a Vaudois town then under the domination of Berne and Fribourg. He got no further, however, than the forests of Jorat, near Lausanne. There, his companions announced themselves as his enemies. "Instead," says Bonivard, "of escorting me further, they locked me up, and obliged me, under menace of death, to assign them my benefice. The Abbé kept the Priory of Saint Victor, agreeing to pay Vaulruz a pension of 200 livres; and the pair of them handed me over to the Duke, who kept me in prison for two years."

The story goes that the Abbé de Monthéron regarded the Priory thus acquired as a negotiable security, and immediately repaired to Rome to realise it. He died, however, before completing the transaction, and Pope Leo X, by formal act, under the seal of the fisher, bestowed the vacant benefice upon a distant cousin of Bonivard's, Léonard de Tournabous, and the consequence was that, when the prisoner at last got his liberty, he found himself deprived of all means of livelihood. He ran into debt while waiting for better times. Except for the Berne innkeeper's statement of claim, which belongs to this career, history entirely loses sight of him until 1527, when he reappears, in interesting circumstances, in the novel character of a man of war.

He had been waiting, he tells us, for a favourable opportunity of recovering possession of his Priory, and, in May 1527, such an opportunity occurred. The news reached Geneva that Rome had been sacked, and the Pope taken

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prisoner, by the army of the Constable de Bourbon. Pierre de la Baume, who had succeeded John the Bastard as Bishop of Geneva, thereupon assumed the right of disposing of all the ecclesiastical patronage of the neighbourhood for the benefit of himself and his friends. For himself he took over the Convent of St Jean though the rightful tenant was a certain absent Cardinal; and he gave Bonivard his permission to return to the Priory of Saint Victor, on the hasty assumption that Prior Léonard de Tournabous must have been killed in the disturbances at Rome. So far so good. Unfortunately it was one thing to take the chair at the banquets in the Priory refectory, and another to collect the revenues belonging to the benefice. These were derived from lands situated in the dominions of the Duke of Savoy, and Bonivard had no means of getting at them except by violence. He made up his mind, therefore, to go to war; and the story of his campaigns may be read at length in his *Chroniques de Genève.*

The Château de Cartigny—a small property belonging to him, situated on a hill above the Rhone, a couple of leagues from Geneva—was the principal scene of his enterprises. It was, he admits, "rather a country seat than a castle;" but he began his operations by garrisoning it with six men under the command of a certain Guillaume Castes of Fribourg. The enemy did not molest them; there was always serious danger of reprisals when citizens of Fribourg were assailed. Emboldened by impunity the whole garrison sallied forth one day to do their marketing in a neighbouring village, leaving only an old woman as caretaker of the fortress. Returning in the course of the afternoon, they found the

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gate locked against them, and the Duke of Savoy's soldiers in possession. Instead of making the attempt to storm it, they walked back to Geneva and reported themselves to Bonivard. He reproached them for their carelessness, and proceeded to engage mercenaries for an expedition on a larger scale.

His commander-in-chief, on this occasion, was a certain Bischelbach, a butcher by trade, who had migrated to Geneva from Berne, because the reformers of the latter city had made it illegal for mistresses to be kept by married men. The second in command was a certain Canon Vuillaumin, also of Berne, an ecclesiastic whom the reformers had ejected from his benefice. Other political and religious refugees made up the rank and file. The Town Council encouraged the enterprise to the extent of lending the raiders half a dozen muskets, and presenting them with 6 lbs of gunpowder. It seems to have been Bonivard's original intention to stay at home in his Priory while the mercenaries did the fighting. They refused, however, to start without him, and he yielded and accompanied them.

The story of the day's events is not the most heroic chapter in Genevan annals. Arriving at a village near the scene of action, the raiders went into an inn and ordered lunch, sending on one of their number, named Diébolt, to summon the garrison to surrender, while they were partaking of it. Instead of surrendering, the garrison fired on Diébolt, who fell, dangerously wounded. Hearing the shot, and seeing the effect of it, the Generalissimo Bischelbach leapt upon his horse and galloped away, leaving Bonivard to take over his command. The Prior did his best to conduct an

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orderly retreat in accordance with the rules of war, carrying his wounded man with him. It was not a very difficult undertaking, as there was no pursuit, but its success was only partial. In one of the hamlets that they had to pass through on their way home, the soldiers noticed that the attitude of the villagers was menacing; the army became a rabble. They dropped the wounded man by the roadside and ran until the walls of Geneva once more gave them shelter.

Such is the story of what we may perhaps describe as Bonivard's Bull Run. Let it further be recorded to his honour that he was not discouraged by defeat, but renewed the campaigns of Cartigny as often as opportunity occurred. His chief enemies were a society of gentlemen of Savoy known as the Knights of the Spoon, because they wore spoons hung round their necks, and vowed that they would "eat Geneva" with them. Their leader was one Pontverre. He and the Prior of Saint Victor used to stalk each other with fire-arms in the woods on the outskirts of the City, and seem, while doing so, to have learnt to respect each other's characters. At all events, when Bonivard comes to record how Pontverre, out of bravado, entered Geneva by night, and was caught and killed by the indignant citizens, he expresses his regret. "He was a virtuous gentleman," he says, "albeit inclined to be quarrelsome."

These stories, it must be admitted, exhibit the Prior of Saint Victor somewhat in the light of a hero of opera bouffe. The transition, however, in his case, from farce to tragedy was sharp; the serio-comic campaigns of Cartigny were the immediate prelude of his long and terrible im-

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prisonment in the Castle of Chillon. He tells the story himself, and his manner of telling it is one of his surest titles to our respect. His restraint is nothing less than amazing—especially when we contrast it with his garrulous chatter about quite unimportant episodes of his career. He neither complains nor boasts; it never occurs to him to pose as a martyr, or to found any title to distinction on his sufferings; he seems to have regarded them as "all in the day's work" in the long struggle for Genevan independence, and quite uninteresting from any other point of view; an attitude that one must needs admire, even though one is disappointed by it. "Some day," he said, "I must write it all up, because it is part of the history of Geneva." But he never did so in any detail. His narrative is short and scrappy, though full of unconscious human touches—the narrative of a man who scorns to wear his heart upon his sleeve, and only lifts the veil and gives a glimpse of it by accident.

His guerilla warfare with the Knights of the Spoon had ended. The Genevans, who at first encouraged his raids, had at last found them a nuisance, and offered him a small pension on condition that he would live in peace. It was only a matter of eighty crowns a year, but Bonivard accepted it, admitting that the Genevan Exchequer could afford no more. Then, having obtained a safe-conduct from the Duke of Savoy, he set out to pay a visit to his mother at Seyssel, a village near Bellegarde, on the Rhone. No harm befell him there, and he started to return by a circuitous route through the Pays de Vaud. He got to Moudon, on the road from Lausanne to Payerne, where the Bishop of Lausanne entertained him.

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"He treated me so well," he says, "that I resolved to go back to Lausanne. The Bishop gave me one of his mounted retainers for an escort, but, when we got to Sainte Catharine, on the Jorat, there suddenly appeared Antoine de Beaufort, Captain of the Castle of Chillon, who sallied with a few companions, from a wood where he had been lying in ambush, and made a rush at me. I was riding a mule, and my guide was on a powerful cart-horse. "Spur! spur!" said I; and I myself put spurs to my beast, and laid my hand upon my sword. But my guide, instead of spurring, turned his horse, and threw himself upon me, and cut my sword-belt with his knife. Then the other worthy folk laid hold of me, and took me prisoner on behalf of the Duke of Savoy, and, in spite of the safe-conduct that I showed them, dragged me, bound and half throttled, to Chillon, where none but God to help me, I was to endure my second passion."

For the first two years of his imprisonment, Bonivard was treated well. M. de Beaufort gave him a room close to his own, and received him as an honoured guest, with whom he gladly sat at table and discussed the topics of the day. In 1532, however, Duke Charles III visited the Castle. He was probably exasperated by the progress which the doctrines of the Reformers had been making in the meantime, and resolved to avenge himself on the one victim who was in his power. "After his departure," says Bonivard, "the Captain thrust me into a dungeon below the level of the Lake, where I remained four years. I do not know whether he did it at the Duke's command or on his own motion. But I do know that I had such abundant leisure for walking

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up and down that I wore a little pathway in the rock which forms the pavement of the dungeon, just as though it had been knocked out with a hammer."

Elsewhere Bonivard tells us that he occupied himself, during his captivity, with the composition of "any number of trifling fancies and ballads, both in the French and Latin languages." We have no certain clue by which to identify the poems conceived under these unhappy circumstances. Even internal evidence fails us; for no poem that Bonivard ever wrote reads like the work of a man whose spirit was broken by confinement. Probably, however, we shall not be wrong in attributing to this period of his career a certain sardonic lampoon on the Duke of Savoy, of whom the poet declares:—

If your case with him be just,
Tremble then you surely must.
If it be nor just nor true,
No need of worry then for you.
Go to sleep without a fear,
He will hold your interests dear.
But never let him know you can
Perceive that he's a treacherous man;
For then he'll either have your head,
Or lock you up in jail instead;
All honest men he does confine,
But asks all wicked men to dine."

They are not very brilliant verses—the original French is not appreciably better than this doggerel English version—but they have a certain interest from the picture which they evoke of the prisoner slowly thinking them out and polish-

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ing them, as he paced to and fro between his pillar and the limit of his chain. Bonivard, at any rate, has neither drawn nor hinted at any alternative picture of his confinement; and his incomplete narrative can only be supplemented by telling the story of his deliverance from the point of view of his deliverers.

Geneva, as we have seen, had been intermittently at war with Savoy for a considerable period; and by a curious irony the most notable incident of the hostilities had been the destruction by the Genevese, for strategic reasons, of the very Priory whose rightful Prior was confined at Chillon. The monks, being suddenly given notice to quit, and being offered no better shelter than that of the *hôpitaux*, or casual wards, naturally protested, and wrote to their *de facto* Prior, entreating him to help them in the matter. Léonard de Tournabous replied that he could do nothing for the moment, but that he exhorted them to wait for better times, and in the meanwhile to serve God with all humility, and live chaste lives as heretofore. To what extent they acted upon his advice we do not know, but the statement of the chronicler that the monks "and their mistresses" assisted, no doubt for a stipulated wage, in the task of demolition, would seem to indicate that chastity was not the distinguishing characteristic of these holy men.

The fortifications having made the City secure against assault, the Duke of Savoy established a blockade. The Genevans, as has been already stated, replied by raiding his dominions, and by soliciting active help from Berne. At last the Bernese agreed that their sympathy should take that form, and on the first of February, 1536, an army of

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6,000 men set out, and marched to Geneva without encountering any resistance. After receiving messages of submission from Morges, Rolles, Villeneuve, Thonon, and Alinges, they captured and garrisoned the important stronghold of Fort de l'Ecluse. Then they started on a second military promenade through the Pays de Vaud. The Duke, being at war with the King of France, had his hands too full to interfere with them. Yverdon, under the command of the Seigneur de Saint Saphorin, made a faint show of resistance, but capitulated as soon as the Bernese cannon were brought into action. Only the Castle of Chillon remained to be taken.

In this siege the Genevese co-operated, sending four boats with a collective complement of 100 men. "Two of the boats," the chronicler tells us, "were equipped as vessels of war, and the other two carried sacks of wool to serve as bulwarks against the artillery of the castle." The assault had hardly begun when the Governor of the Castle got on board his private yacht and sailed away. The Genevan boats started in pursuit, but, owing to their heavy armaments and their bales of wool, failed to overtake him. Meanwhile the fortress surrendered to the Bernese, who entered and found four prisoners in the dungeon cell. One of them was a common criminal convicted of a vulgar murder; two were Genevan citizens whom the Duke had detained when they came to parley with him under a flag of truce; the fourth was Bonivard.

The murderer was immediately decapitated, apparently without trial, by his deliverers in the Castle yard, and Bonivard and his companions were brought back in triumph, and amid general rejoicings to Geneva.

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## CHAPTER III

### BONIVARD'S HISTORY—CALVIN'S OPINION OF IT—BONIVARD AND THE CONSISTORY—HIS MATRIMONIAL DIFFICULTIES—HIS DEATH

THE Geneva to which Bonivard returned at the age of forty-three was a very different place from the Geneva which he had left at the age of thirty-seven. The Reformation had intervened, introducing new standards of conduct, and placing new men in office. The City in which the Prisoner of Chillon had been wont to feast and rollick had become, as it were, a religious and moral drill-ground, with constant church parades for all the citizens, and stern punishments for such offences as gluttony, late hours, and the excessive adornment of the person. We will treat these matters more in detail presently. Here it is enough to point out how the change affected the position of Bonivard. In the old Geneva he had been looked up to as one of the leaders of thought; in the new Geneva he was treated as a school-boy, privileged to a certain extent for sentimental reasons, but none the less liable to sharp reprimand as often as he overstepped the boundaries of circumspection, whether in his public or his private life. The contrast must have been very striking to him, and cannot have been entirely pleasant. Let us recall two pictures of his career which bring it into clear relief.

In 1528, for example—two years before his captivity—

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FRANÇOIS DE BONIVARD, THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

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# CHAPTER III

[illegible] OPINION OF [illegible] AND [illegible] MONTHLY DIFFICULTIES — [illegible]

[illegible] Bonivard returned at the age of [illegible] different place from the Geneva which [illegible] of thirty-seven. The Reform [illegible] conduct and [illegible] The City in which the Prisoner of [illegible] had been wont to [illegible] and [illegible] had [illegible] and [illegible] drill ground, [illegible] parades [illegible] the [illegible] and the [illegible] of the person. We will treat these matters more [illegible] presently. Here it is enough to point out how [illegible] the position of Bonivard. In the old Geneva he [illegible] to as one of the leaders of [illegible] Geneva he was [illegible] school boy, [illegible] extent for sentimental reasons, but [illegible] as often as he [illegible] of circumspection, whether [illegible] The [illegible] cannot have been entirely pleasant [illegible] of his career which bring it into [illegible]

[illegible] captivity —

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we find him receiving a deputation of the leading citizens who wanted to consult him as to the propriety of openly embracing the Lutheran faith. He replied to them from a standpoint of moral superiority, and with the air of a man whose right to administer rebuke was recognized.

"For one good grain of corn," he said, "how many weeds are there flourishing in this poor church of ours! For one citizen sincerely anxious to reform himself, how many who merely seek liberty to live as they please! How can you reform yourselves, irreformable characters that you are! You complain that priests and monks are gamblers and drunkards. So are you! You want to get rid of your clergy and replace them by ministers of the Gospel; but when these ministers try to reform your vices, then you will be indignant and will drive them out. If reform is what you want, begin by setting good examples!"

Wise and weighty words, it must be admitted: the words, too, of a teacher who was sure of himself, and knew that he ranked among the moral forces of his period. Yet the teacher who taught so nobly, and so obviously as one having authority, was the same man who, in 1537, was forbidden, by special order of the Town Council of Geneva, to have a maid-servant living in his house. There could be no more convincing proof of the radical nature of the changes which the Reformation had introduced into Genevan life and manners.

It is, however, to the inquisitorial methods of the Reformers that we owe our somewhat detailed knowledge of the incidents of Bonivard's later life. In common with the rest of the citizens, he lived, so to say, in a glass house; and the inquisitors peered through the windows and made notes



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of what they saw, in various official registers. The episode of the maid-servant is only one of many instances in point.

The first care of the Council, prompted by a suggestion from Berne, was to provide Bonivard with an income. They passed a resolution, according him a pension of 200 crowns, and "a lodging for himself and his male legitimate children." He was not satisfied, but protested that the pension should be larger, and that the State should also pay his debts. His demand was rejected; and the repetition of the promise to "support" him was accompanied with the invidious condition—"provided he is willing to live decently." Bonivard thereupon withdrew to Berne, where he had influential friends; and his claims were made the subject of diplomatic representations. Geneva yielded, increased his pension, and voted him the lump sum of 800 crowns, with which to pay his debts; but this concession only raised a further difficulty. Bonivard had creditors in both cities; and the grant was insufficient to pay them all in full. Each set of creditors, claimed to have a first charge upon the moneys voted; and the creditors were, in each case, supported by their government, with the result that the liquidation of the liabilities of the Prisoner of Chillon became a grave question of international politics. After delicate negotiations, however, even this quarrel was adjusted; and Bonivard was invited to return to Geneva in the capacity of official historian of the City. His books, which he had pawned, were redeemed for him on the understanding that they should become public property after his death.

From the Register of the Council we gain a few interesting glimpses of the historian at work. The first entry, in

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October 1532, is merely to the effect that "François de Bonivard is ordered to work at the Chronicles of the Town." It appears side by side with an intimation that Calvin is to be presented with a cask of wine in consideration of his public services. The second entry, dated June 1546, records that "a box of sweet-meats is to be given to François de Bonivard, who is working at the Chronicles, and his servant who writes at his dictation is to be given a pair of boots." It jostles a resolution to the effect that, as Guillaume Farel, the reformer, is more shabbily dressed than becomes a minister of the Word, he shall be presented with a new suit of clothes, as a token of the regard of his fellow-citizens. Later, in 1547, we have this entry:—

"François de Bonivard asks the Council to communicate to him all the documents which may be helpful to him for his History of Geneva, which he will be unable to continue further than the time when he was imprisoned at Chillon, not being sufficiently acquainted with the events that occurred after that date. He also begs the Council to assign him, for the coming winter, a room, more convenient than his own house, to work in. He cannot, he says, write conveniently and compose as he should in the room in which he and his family have their meals."

This request was granted. Bonivard was given a room with a stove in it for his study. He worked at his leisure, first getting his hand in by translating Pastel's *De magistratibus Atheniensium Liber*, and Stumpf's *Chronicles of the Leagues*, and had his book finished in the course of 1552. He applied for permission to have it printed, and the question was referred to Calvin. Calvin opposed the application,

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mainly on the ground that the style of the Chronicle was inconsistent with the dignity of history; and Bonivard was invited to go over his work and remove all solecisms, vulgarisms, and other faults of composition. He did this to the best of his ability, but his work was nevertheless allowed to remain in manuscript until the year 1831.

It must be admitted that, from Calvin's own point of view, there was a good deal to be said for his adverse verdict. He was a stylist who wrote the language of the schools; Bonivard, though undeniably a scholar, was no stylist, and wrote the language of the streets. He was the sort of writer who called a spade a shovel, and preferred a homely metaphor to any other. His French was to the French of Calvin very much what the Greek of Herodotus is to the Greek of Plato. To make it clear how small and closely circumscribed were the Genevan territories he curtly said, "one could hardly spit over the wall without spitting on the Duke of Savoy." He declared that the Duke liked Geneva "as the glutton likes a good plump fowl." He denounced certain patriots whom he disliked as those who "wanted to catch the fish without getting their feet wet." When he wished to fix the hour of the day at which any event occurred, he never spoke of it otherwise than in its relation to "dinner-time" or "supper-time."

One can understand that this sort of thing jarred upon Calvin, who had little appetite for food, whose good qualities did not include a sense of humour, and whose own prose style was marked by classical precision and severe restraint. It jarred upon him, no doubt, much as the garrulous anecdotes of Herodotus would have jarred upon

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Plato, had he been invited to criticise them as the works of a contemporary—as, to take a more modern instance, the writings of Mr. Kipling jar upon the English disciples of Flaubert. But Calvin was wrong, misled by that personal equation which misleads so many critics. The manuscript which he first set its author to tinker, and then left to gather dust upon the shelves was not to be judged by the strict classical standards of France, for the excellent reason that it was not the work of a Frenchman and claimed no relation to French literature. It was Genevan, racey of the soil,—almost the only, and certainly the best, articulate expression of Genevan thought, and life, and manners, belonging to the days before the invasion of the pastors and professors had begun to break down barriers, and make Geneva an intellectual dependency of France. Moreover, the style was the man, as it always is, and the man was a man with a singularly acute mind, and a far keener capacity for penetrating through sophisms, exposing conventional illusions, and seeing things as they really were than any other Genevan man of letters of his period,—not excluding Calvin himself. Calvin, in short, never gave clearer proof of his limitations as a literary critic than when he adjudged the *Chroniques de Genève* unworthy to be printed.

Let us leave this branch of the subject, however, and return to Bonivard's personal affairs. He wrote various other books; but these need not detain us here. It is more interesting to narrate the story of his appearances before the Consistory, and the catastrophes, now comic and now tragic, of his married life.

Historians are not, as a rule, a refractory or riotous

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class of men; and one would have supposed it possible for the official chronicler of the City of Geneva, at a time when he had reached or passed middle age, so to order his life as to avoid admonition from his spiritual pastors. The rules, however, were many and minute; the City was so small that no breach of them could well escape detection; and the result is that, time after time, we find Bonivard arraigned before the ministers for some offence against the minor morals. His act of gallantry with the maid-servant was the gravest of his delinquencies; but there were others. On one occasion we find him in trouble for playing a game of backgammon with the poet, Clément Marot, the famous author of the first metrical version of the Psalms. On another occasion he was accused of beating his wife; but this time he defended himself successfully, proving that the beating was deserved, with the result that it was the lady whom the ministers admonished. The excuses which he offered to a charge of absenting himself from Church were less acceptable. He pleaded that he was unable to walk, but was told that he had better get someone to carry him, as he had done when he went to the town-hall to look at some new decorations. Finally he was found guilty, in spite of strenuous denials, of writing a lampoon on Calvin; and was sentenced, if the Register of the Consistory may be believed, to receive the Holy Communion [1] by way of punishment for the offence.

Most of Bonivard's appearances before the Consistory, however, were in connection with his matrimonial affairs.

[1] Redemander la cène.

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He married four times after his release from prison, and two, at any rate, of the marriages were unhappy. He first wife was Catharine Baumgartner of Berne, a lady of good family; the Town Council of Geneva, on one occasion, voted her half an ell of velvet in consideration of her good offices in persuading her husband to sell a house which the town wanted to buy; she died in 1543. His second wife was Jeanne Darmeis, an elderly lady, the widow of two husbands, and the mother of a Syndic; and this was the wife of whom Bonivard declared that she thoroughly deserved to be beaten. His life with her was an incessant series of wrangles; she deserted him, and went to live at Gex and Fribourg; the strong arm of the law had to be invoked to bring her back to her conjugal duties. Of the third wife we only know that her name was Pernette Mazue, and that she was a widow. Concerning the fourth wife there is a painful story to be told.

She was called Catharine de Courtavone, and was a nun who had run away from a convent. Bonivard, in the kindness of his heart—there is really no reason to suspect any ulterior motive—had given her shelter in his house. He had even spoken vaguely of marrying her, but, as the lady seemed indifferent in the matter, had let the project drop. Before long, the facts came to the ears of the ministers, and Bonivard was summoned before the Consistory. It was contrary to good morals, he was told, that he should harbour this young woman, and the promise of marriage must be fulfilled without delay. Bonivard objected. His relations with his *protégée*, he pleaded, were Platonic; his age and infirmities were such that those relations must necessarily

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continue to be Platonic, even if the marriage ceremony took place; consequently he begged to be excused. The ministers, however, were obdurate. They declared that the excuse was frivolous, and that Bonivard's infirmities must not hinder him from re-entering the holy estate. He yielded to their authority, if not to their better judgment, and married his fourth wife at the age of sixty-nine. It is recorded that the bridegroom's wedding present to the bride was a copy of his own theological and philosophical treatise, "Amartigénée," and that the bride's present to the bridegroom was a copy of the *De Coronâ* of Demosthenes.

This fourth marriage of Bonivard's was even more unhappy than the second. Three years after its celebration, his wife was arraigned before the Consistory on a charge of infidelity to her husband. One reads, with sympathetic interest that it was not Bonivard who brought the charge, and that he even allowed himself to be called as a witness for the defence. Whether he actually believed in his wife's innocence, or merely pitied her, and sought to shield her from the terrible punishment with which such offences as hers were visited in those barbarous times, we have no means of deciding. The fact that he was nearly old enough to be her grand-father, had never, so far as one knows, been her lover, and had only married her, under compulsion, to hush the voice of scandal, makes the latter hypothesis quite as reasonable as the former. At all events, he testified that he had found nothing to complain of in her conduct, except that she had urged him to be more devout than he cared to be, had taunted him for not preaching the gospel, and had beaten him for inviting his friends to drop in upon him and drink a glass of wine.

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It was in vain, however. The guilt of Madame Bonivard was proved. Her paramour—a certain unfrocked friar—was beheaded; and she herself, in accordance with the cruel custom of the age, was sewn up in a sack, and thrown like a load of rubbish into the River Rhone.

So, none of his marriages having brought him any children, the old man's old age was lonely. He was seventy-two when his fellow-citizens put his wife to death for an offence against him which he himself, recognizing the extenuating circumstances, was apparently anxious to condone; and he dragged on for five years more. Beyond the fact that the most comfortable house in the town was allotted to him, we have no knowledge of how his declining days were passed. The Consistory, at any rate, ceased from troubling him, and we may hope that the ministers strained a point in his favour, and allowed him to stay away from their sermons when he was indisposed, and to play backgammon when he felt inclined. But this is mere conjecture. We only know that he died, in 1570, at the age of seventy-seven, and, in spite of his weaknesses and eccentricities, left an honoured memory behind him.

He is not to be reckoned among the great forces of the Reformation—even in his native country. Stronger and sterner men were needed to organise the movement, and give it its element of permanence. But for them, the Counter Reformation would have prevailed at Geneva, as in so many other places. Bonivard, however, remains the most human figure of all those who played leading parts at this terrible period of history; and his place in the hearts of his countrymen is more secure than is that of either

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Calvin or Farel. It has been worth while to face the barbarous French of the Genevan records in order to learn to know him as he really was.

And now it is time to turn back to the beginnings of the Reformation, and try to see them also as they really were.

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GENEVE CITE SITVEE EN TERROIR
fecond au pays de Sauoye iouxte lyſſue du
Roſne, ſeparant ſes Ondes du Lac de Loſane.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE REFORMATION AT GENEVA—A CHARACTER SKETCH OF GUILLAUME FAREL

THE Reformation may be said to have begun in Switzerland on the day when Bernhardin Samson came, on the Pope's behalf, to Zurich, to sell indulgences at three pence each (or a crown if engrossed on parchment) and found no market for his wares because Zwingli had explained, from the pulpit, that they were not worth the money. This was in 1520. In January 1523 Zwingli proved, in a disputation open to all comers, that the celibacy of the clergy was a mistake; and in April of the same year he brought his practice into line with his theories by marrying a widow. Thus the way was paved for the abolition of the mass at Zurich in 1525; and the example of Zurich was soon afterwards followed by Berne, Basle, and other important centres of intellectual life. An Evangelical Alliance was formed; religious wars broke out; the usual atrocities were perpetrated. But we have no space to dwell upon them. Our business is with the great missionary journeys of Guillaume Farel, which extended over a period of nine years, and culminated in the conversion of Geneva.

Farel was a Frenchman, born in 1489, near Gap in Dauphiné. He was fairly well educated at Paris, under Lefèvre of Etaples; but his culture was not of the kind

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that softens the manners and abates ferocity, and really played little part in the moulding of his character or the manifestation of his genius. His gifts were essentially the gifts of the mob-orator; he was constantly displaying the defects of the mob-orator's qualities to the consternation of his friends. He shouted Erasmus down, comparing that philosopher to Balaam, because he was able to see more than one side of a question at a time; and he received many letters of remonstrance from Œcolampadius on the riotousness of the methods by which he spread the light. Yet by very reason of the coarseness of his fibre he was qualified for work which neither Erasmus nor Œcolampadius could have done.

In the days of his darkness, he tells us, he was a better Papist than the Pope himself, and worshipped so many saints that his mind was like a Roman Catholic Calendar. On his conversion he championed the other side with equal emphasis, propounding theses wherever he went, and challenging all comers to step up and confound him in debate. He proved himself too hot a Protestant for Basle and had to leave that City; but Duke Ulrich of Wurtemburg gave him permission to preach the Gospel at Mont-béliard. "He was transported with delight," says his biographer, "that God should have given him this opportunity of labouring for the advancement of his kingdom." He laboured for it by snatching an image out of a priest's hand on the occasion of a procession, and pitching it over the bridge into the river. Riots resulted, and the Duke, his protector, advised him to migrate. He obeyed, and began his long and stormy progress through the Canton de Vaud, preaching at Aigle,

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at Bex, at Olon, at Morat, at Neuchâtel, at Yvonand, and many other places, steadily rolling back the tide of superstition.

Our information is ample, and we can easily draw ourselves a picture of the preacher. He was a little man with a red beard, piercing eyes, a ready wit, a voice of thunder, a zeal that nothing could quench, and a courage that nothing could subdue. All his courage was needed for his task; for he often encountered opposition, and was offered outrage and indignity. Priests used to set the church bells clanging when he preached; congregations used to attend his sermons with their ears stuffed with cotton wool; women in particular mobbed him, threw mud at him, fustigated him in shameful fashion, scratched his face, and on one occasion even pulled him up and down the church by the beard. But neither outrage nor indignity ever forced Farel to retreat. He never knew when he was beaten, and consequently always won in the end. He never rested on his laurels, but had no sooner won one battle than he struck camp and marched out to another; and everywhere those who had come to scratch or fustigate remained to pray. If, in addition to his enthusiasm for the propagation of the Gospel, he had something of an Irishman's high-spirited delight in fighting for fighting's sake—a certain pagan exaltation at seeing himself the centre of a disturbance,—we must not blame him, but remember that only a man of this exuberant vitality could have awakened the Canton de Vaud so quickly to a sense of sin.

Unfortunately Farel, like the majority of mob-orators, found that it was easier to arouse the passions of the popu-

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lace than to control them, and had many devoted followers whose zeal was in excess of their discretion. Of one of them, Thomas Malingre, pastor of Yverdon, it is recorded that "his methods were little evangelical—he crowned the Roman Catholic priests with cow-dung." Of another we read that, in Farel's own presence, he dashed the host out of the hands of an officiating priest. But these are minor matters. The story of a greater riot must be told to give a fair idea of the circumstances by which the evangelist's tumultuous progress was attended.

The place was Neuchâtel. Farel was preaching at the hospice, and the hall was not large enough to hold all those who wished to hear him. A happy thought struck him. "Why pay the Gospel less honour than the Mass?" he cried. "The Church—that is the place where the Gospel should be preached." The effect, says the historian, was as though he had thrown a spark into a powder-magazine. "To the Church!" echoed the crowd in riotous frenzy, and suited the action to the word. Preacher and congregation surged together up the street. The doors of the church were forced; the lawful occupants were hustled out. Amid applause, Farel climbed up into the pulpit in which he had no right to be, and thundered against the Pope and all his works. His discourse is said to have been one of the most eloquent that he ever preached. His listeners acclaimed him, crying, "We want the evangelical religion; we and our children will live and die in it." And then they began to break things—to upset the altars, to smash the stained-glass windows, to shatter images and tear up pictures, to throw about the waters, and pour the consecrated wine

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upon the pavement. The evangelist, conscious, no doubt, of his limitations, did not lift a hand to interfere with them.

Such was the reformer who set out to reform Geneva. To a certain extent the way had been prepared for him. We have already seen Bonivard giving good advice, as early as 1528, to the citizens who consulted him as to the desirability of openly declaring themselves Lutherans. He had held even stronger language the year before, when the Archbishop of Vienne excommunicated the Genevese *en masse*. "If you have nothing to reproach yourselves with," he asked, "what harm can the Pope do you? He is not the master of your consciences, so do not be afraid. If the Pope of Rome excommunicates you, the Pope of Berne will give you absolution." In his *Chronicles*, too, he tells us where these new opinions came from, and how they got bruited abroad. They were introduced by travelling merchants from France and Nuremberg, who ate meat on Fridays in defiance of the Church.

"When good Christians reproved them, they replied that God had made no mention of Lent in the Holy Gospel; that it was folly to confess to priests since they could not give absolution; that the members of the religious orders ought to be sent to work in the fields; that the saints were dead and done for, and that it was nonsense to pray to them, seeing that they could be of no assistance."

The sentiments of the citizens in general, however, had not yet reached the point of welcoming Farel with open arms. In October 1532, he slipped into the town, and succeeded in preaching two sermons at the inn of the Tour Perce. Then he was peremptorily summoned to appear

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before an ecclesiastical Court which took objection, not only to the doctrines which he preached, but also to the costume in which he preached them. "You get yourself up," the Court protested, "like a gendarme or a brigand." Ignoring this charge, Farel replied with vigour, in the language which Elijah used to Ahab, "It is thou, O king, that troublest Israel and not me. Yea, it is you who trouble the world with your traditions, your human inventions, and your dissolute opinions." "To the Rhine with him!" rejoined the monks in chorus; and the upshot was that the laity had to protect Farel from the attempt of the clergy to murder him, and the Syndics gave him six hours to pack and go, on pain of being burnt alive, if he were found in Geneva after the expiration of that time.

He withdrew at once. This reformer, who afterwards assisted at the burning of Servetus with a fiendish glee, preferred that the blood of some other martyr should serve as the seed of the Church on this occasion, and persuaded Antoine Froment, pastor of Yvonand, on the Lake of Neuchâtel, to take the task of evangelising Geneva off his hands. Disguising himself as a school-master, and advertising that he would "teach reading and writing in one month to all comers, young and old," and would also "heal divers diseases gratuitously," Froment established himself at Molard, and preached; while Farel, from a safe distance, forwarded him liturgies and religious tracts. Afterwards, in December 1533, when Bishop Pierre de Baume had definitely withdrawn from Geneva, and the action of the Council had made Protestantism a tolerated faith, and preachers incurred no danger of being burnt at the stake, but only a certain risk

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of having their heads broken in a row, Farel, who lacked no sort of courage except five o'clock in the morning courage, returned and plunged a second time into the fray.

A splendid audacity characterised his methods. He walked into any church, climbed the stairs of any pulpit, put away the crucifix with some scornful observation, and preached a Gospel sermon without regard to the feelings of the incumbent whose place he had usurped. The magistrates remonstrated with him on the subject. It would be more correct, they said, if he were to ask leave before invading other people's pulpits; but Farel only answered, "Magnificent signors, you must give just commands if you wish the servants of God to obey you"; and the matter was allowed to drop. Farel went on preaching where and how he pleased, and by degrees prevailed. A great theological disputation was arranged for the 30th of May, 1535, in the great hall of the Couvent de la Rive, and lasted, without interruption until the 24th of June. Bernard, Viret, Farel, and Froment, spoke for Protestantism; Pierre Caroli, a doctor of the Sorbonne, and Jean Chapuis, a Dominican of Geneva, for Popery; and the Protestants were victorious all along the line. Caroli and Chapuis, admitting themselves vanquished, embraced the Reformed faith there and then; and two months afterwards, on the 27th of August, the mass was formally abolished, and religious liberty was taken away from the Roman Catholics and given to the Protestants.

Such are the essential facts concerning the Reformation at Geneva, related as shortly as possible, without anecdotal embroidery. The spectacle of the theological disputation in the Couvent de la Rive (with town councillors sitting to



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keept he theologians in order, and four secretaries to take down their arguments) dragging slowly on for nearly a month and ending in a veritable stampede of citizens into the evangelical fold, is the more impressive when we remember that it took place at a time when Geneva was at war with Duke and Bishop, and, in fact, almost in a state of siege. The whole history of the period, however, is impressive and the detail is nearly always picturesque. We will try to look at the picture through the eyes of contemporary witnesses—and principally through those of that shrewd observer and lively annalist, Sister Jeanne de Jussie of the Convent of Sainte Claire.

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## CHAPTER V

### THE CONVENT OF SAINTE CLAIRE—THE NARRATIVE OF SISTER JEANNE DE JUSSIE—THE ATTEMPT TO CONVERT THE NUNS—THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM GENEVA

THE Convent of Sainte Claire was founded at Geneva, in 1476, by Yolande, wife of Duke Amadeus IX of Savoy, and sister of Louis XI of France. At the time of the Reformation it sheltered eight and twenty nuns, of whom Sister Jeanne de Jussie was one. She was of good family, well educated, and thirty-three years of age, having taken the veil at eighteen. The Reformers expelled her, together with the other sisters, from Geneva. Afterwards, when they had all found an asylum at Annecy, she rose to the position of Lady Superior, and there, at leisure and in tranquillity, she wrote out her recollections of the stormy times she had passed through. She did not write for publication; her story was merely meant to be read aloud in the Convent for the instruction of the younger nuns. Some sixty years later, however, her manuscript was printed, not as an historical document, but as a religious tract, which, it was hoped, would put the heretics to confusion. The title—*Levain de Calvinisme*—is not hers, but her editor's. Sister Jeanne, as a matter of fact, does not even mention Calvin's name, but brings her narrative to an end before his appearance on the scene.

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As a polemic, the book has long since lost any interest that it ever had; but as a picture—or rather as a series of pictures—it will never lose its interest. It is the one genuine human document of the period which remains. Sister Jeanne has even less regard for the so-called dignity of history than Bonivard; she is not an impartial chronicler but an impetuous gossip, with a mind full to overflowing of prejudices. But gossip, after all, is what clothes the dry bones of history with flesh. Sister Jeanne was a live woman; she wrote of what she saw; she shows us, as more dignified writers do not, what the Reformation at Geneva looked like.

The note is struck on an early page in a passage in which Sister Jeanne gives us the History of Protestantism in a sentence:—

"The Prince and great High Priest of this damnable sect was a Monk of Saint Augustin, named Martin Luther, who being filled with iniquity and pride, gave his mind, in the year 1517, to every kind of malice and error, with the result that he revived all the heresies that have ever existed since the death of our Lord, and had them printed at Basle, and disseminated everywhere, and poisoned with his venom all the kingdoms and countries of the Christian Church, so that, if Kings and Princes had not severely punished the followers of that accursed sect, the souls redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ would have been in great danger of damnation."

Next comes a note of the arrival in Geneva of that "nasty little preacher," Guillaume Farel, and a story, not told elsewhere, of his appearance before the ecclesiastical Court. He was told to go, we read, but did not dare be-

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cause a mob was waiting for him outside; whereupon a burly monk laid hands on him and with *un grand coup de pied* sent him flying through the door. Then we have various stories of various religious riots and disturbances: stories of Roman Catholic altars carried off to Protestant houses to be used as wash-hand stands; stories of husbands who locked their wives up in their bedrooms to prevent them from attending mass; a story of another husband who seized his wife by the hair in order to drag her, screaming, to the Supper of the Lord; a story of a Lutheran who fed his horse on consecrated wafers; a story of an unsuccessful plot to break into the convent by night and carry the nuns off to be the mistresses of the leading citizens; and many other stories of the sort. When the nuns heard such stories, Sister Jeanne tells us, they used to form processions and march round the cloisters, singing penitential psalms; but the progress of the Reformation was not perceptibly delayed by these religious exercises.

Actual at all points, the narrative gains in actuality when it records how, after a while, the development of events brought the reluctant sisters into personal contact with the Reformers. One of these, quite early in the history of the movement, had occasion to call at the Convent and discuss some question relating to the knocking down of a wall. He insisted upon washing his hands in the holy water, and, when he got outside, went about boasting that he had been privileged to kiss the nuns all round. "But this," says Sister Jeanne, "was a foul lie; for he did not even attempt to kiss any one of us." Another visitor was a lady who, though only allowed to converse with the sisters

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through a grating, sought, with "piquant words," to persuade them to break their vows of chastity. The Lady Superior very properly shut down the grating in her face, but she "stopped there a long time talking to the wooden shutter without receiving any answer—which made her very angry."

It was not long after this that the position of the nuns began to attract the attention of the authorities. Farel in particular made their case the subject of a sermon. They were his poor blind erring sisters, he said, but they deserved to be pelted with stones, because they undertook to preserve their virginity for ever—"a thing which God had not commanded, knowing it to be impossible." He further insinuated that they accorded their favours secretly to friars of the Cordelian order, in return for partridges, fat capons, and other delicacies of the table; and he declared that they ought to be "turned out and compelled to marry in accordance with the commandment of God." The effect of the discourse was that, as soon as the morning sacrifice was over, the young men of Geneva climbed up on to the Convent wall, and sat there, singing amorous songs for the edification of the inmates; Farel, as usual, making no attempt to interfere.

This was shortly before the theological debate which decided the future religion of Geneva. The sisters of Sainte Claire were ordered by the Syndics to be present at the discussion; but they refused on the ground that their vows forbade them ever to quit the cloister, and force was not employed. Their father confessor, however, Father Gacy, [1] a poet and

[1] Jean Gacy, author of *La Déploration de la Cité de Genève sur le fait des hérétiques qui l'ont tyranniquement opprimée*—a satire

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theologian of some local celebrity, was treated with less deference. Four *sergents-de-ville* arrested him and dragged him to the debating hall, whence he daily brought back to the Convent the most deplorable accounts of the proceedings there; relating that the Reformers had "treated the Virgin Mary as a woman of bad character," had declared that they had "no higher opinion of the saints in Paradise than of men living on the earth," and had uttered "ever so many other heresies which it horrifies me to think of or write about."

Still, though the sisters were allowed to absent themselves from the disputation, the Reformers had not forgotten them. The disputation, in fact, was hardly over when a band of Reformers—Farel, Viret, Bernard, a Syndic, and some others, about fifteen in all—came knocking at the Convent door, at ten o'clock in the morning, when "the poor sisters were just sitting down to dinner." The Lady Superior declined to admit them, but invited them to say what they had to say through the grating. The Syndic replied: "By the Lord God, we mean to come inside; if you don't open the door, we shall break it down, and you will be sorry for it." Then the door was opened; sister Jeanne proceeds:

"Then all entered the Chapter House, and the Syndic said:

"'Mother Abbess, fetch all the sisters here without delay; otherwise we shall go over the convent to look for them.'

on Protestantism generally and the Bernese Protestants in particular. He also wrote an attack, in prose and verse, on Martin Luther, published at Geneva in 1524.

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"Then said the Mère Vicaire.

"'Gentlemen, you have betrayed us. I will not listen to your sermons of perdition.'

"And she tried to excuse herself in every possible way; but the Abbess and the Father Confessor induced all the sisters to come, in holy obedience to them,—young and old, sick and well. So they were all brought together, and the youngest of them were stationed in front of the accursed Farel and his evangelists, while young men stood beside them, to deceive and flatter them. Silence was enjoined, and Farel proceeded, declaring that the Virgin Mary had not lived a solitary life, but was diligent in succouring and serving her aged cousin. In this way he spoke, in terms of vituperation, of the holy cloister, of religion, of chastity, and of virginity, in a way that went to the hearts of the poor sisters.

"Then the Mère Vicaire, seeing that the young men were talking to the younger sisters, and flattering them, jumped up from her seat among the elder ones and said:—

"'Mr. Syndic, since your young people don't keep quiet, I shall not keep quiet either. I insist upon hearing what they are saying to my sisters.'

"And she stationed herself between the sisters and the young men, saying:

"'Since your preacher is such a holy man, why don't you treat him with respect and obedience? You're a pack of young rascals, but you won't make any progress here.'

"Whereat they were all indignant and exclaimed:—

"'What the Devil is the matter with the woman? Are you mad? Go back to your place.'

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"'I won't,' she said, 'until these young men leave the sisters alone!'"

So Mère Vicairè was put out of the room; and the preacher resumed his discourse on the institution of matrimony. We read that "when he referred to the corruption of the flesh, the sisters began to scream"; and that when he spoke of the advantages of married life, the Mère Vicaire who was listening at the key-hole, began to batter at the panels, exclaiming: "Don't you listen to him, my sisters; don't you listen to him." So, after labouring at the conversion of the sisters from ten o'clock in the morning until five o'clock in the afternoon, the Reformers retired discomfited. A crowd of three hundred persons was waiting for them outside the gate, prepared to offer marriage to any nun whom they might have persuaded to accompany them; but they came forth alone, the last to leave being thumped on the back by a nun who desired to hurry his departure.

One of the sisters, however—"the ill-advised Sister Blasine"—was converted by the arguments of the preachers, though she did not say so at the time. The others noticed that she sat apart and laughed softly to herself instead of praying, and they asked her what this strange behaviour meant. She explained that it meant that she was thinking of getting married, and the rest were stirred with indignation. They tried to detain her against her will, but the citizens, equally indignant, not only broke into the Convent and fetched her out, but insisted that the Convent should provide her with a dowry to the amount of 200 crowns. The Lady Superior argued at great length that the Convent was not in a position to do so; but the Syndics replied by

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putting in an execution and seizing furniture to the value of the sum demanded. They also offered to find both husband and dowry for Sister Jeanne herself, using, she says, "words so dissolute and abominable that the mere recollection of them horrifies me"; but Sister Jeanne was a match for them in dialectic.

"Get away!" she said. "Your foul breath stifles my heart, and it is no more use your preaching to me than if you were to churn the sea to make butter."

A few days later, Sister Blasine returned, escorted by Syndics, and dressed in the height of fashion, to demand damages for discipline inflicted upon her during the period of her membership of the sisterhood. The Lady Superior admitted the facts but pleaded justification. "Imprisonment," she said, "did her good; see how well she is looking. As for the whipping, you must know that this kind of correction is as necessary in the cloister as in other walks of life, and Sister Blasine has never been whipped unless she thoroughly deserved it." Sister Blasine replied that she had been whipped for working at her spinning wheel on Corpus Christi Day. "And very wicked it was of you to do so," interrupted the Mère Vicaire. But the Syndics adjudged that the claims of Sister Blasine must be satisfied.

It was the culminating outrage. The nuns decided to leave Geneva, and the Lady Superior applied to the Syndic for an armed escort.

"'Certainly ladies,' replied the Syndic and the Lieutenant. 'Pack up what you want to take with you, and carry the parcels down to the door. We will provide eight wagons to carry your belongings, and we promise to conduct you

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safely as far as the Bridge over the Arve, where our territory ends.'"

Thus began the "dolorous departure" which Sister Jeanne so vividly describes. It was hastened by a rumour that "the young men of the town have decided to break into the convent to-night, and strip the older nuns of their garments, and abduct the younger ones"; but the report seems to have been unfounded, for no such untoward incident occurred. The Syndic did his duty, and marched out three hundred armed men to protect the sisters from violence and insult:

"He ordered them to behead, on the spot, without mercy, anyone who spoke a word, whether for good or evil, at the departure of the poor nuns.... And many good people left the town, to guard their holy faith, and said to each other: 'Alas! The City of Geneva loses to-day all that is good in it and all that illuminates it. It is not worth while to live there any longer.' Then the Syndic turned round and encouraged them to start, and when the gate was opened, several of the sisters nearly fainted away in their terror; but the Mère Vicaire plucked up her courage and said:—'Fie, my sisters! Make the sign of the Cross, and fix your hearts upon our Lord!'

"Then taking her sister (Sister Catharine) who was very ill and feeble, and leant upon a stick, Sister Cecile holding her upon the other side, she bravely stepped out the first. Then came the Mother Abbess, bowed down with age, and pain, and illness, a strong sister supporting her by walking arm in arm with her; and then came Sister Jeanne de Jussie, hand in hand with Sister Guillaume de Villetto... and all

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the sisters followed, two and two, holding each other's hands, their faces hidden, observing a strict silence."

For a moment the Mère Vicaire broke the silence to point out to the Syndic that a young man was disobeying his orders and whispering to a nun. The Syndic ordered him to desist under pain of instant execution; and the procession passed on until it reached the Bridge. There some of the citizens, being now out of Genevan jurisdiction, gave utterance to cries of derision: but others wept bitterly to see the sisters go:—

"The Syndic himself, when the moment of their departure came, was so moved that he sobbed aloud, and wept bitterly; and he and his companions helped the sisters, one after the other, onto the bridge, and took their leave of them, saying, 'Farewell, fair ladies. Truly your departure makes us sad,' though what he said in his own heart was, 'Geneva, at this hour thou losest all that was good in thee, and all thy light.' And then when all of them were safely on the bridge, he clapped his hands together and said, 'Now it is all settled. There's no way out of it, and nothing to be gained by discussing the matter further.'"

So the sisters crossed the bridge, and wandered on over the fields to seek a refuge in Savoy. It was the first time since their taking of the veil that they had been outside the Convent walls, and some of them had spent all their lives in the cloister and grown old there, so that they were in no fit state to travel thus on foot. Let Sister Jeanne tell us what befell them:—

"Truly it was a pitiful thing to see this holy company in such condition. so overcome by pain and toil that several

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of them broke down and fainted by the way—and that on a rainy day and in a muddy road, and with no means of getting out of their trouble, for they were all on foot, except four invalids who were in a cart. There were six poor aged sisters, who had been for sixteen years members of the Order, and two who for sixty-six years had never been outside the Convent gate. The fresh air was too much for them. They fainted away; and when they saw the beasts of the fields, they were terrified, thinking that the cows were bears, and that the sheep were ravening wolves. Those who met them could not find words to express their compassion for them; and, though the Mère Vicaire had given each sister a stout pair of boots to keep her feet dry, the greater number of them would not walk in boots, but carried them tied to their girdles, and in this way it took them from five o'clock in the morning until nearly night-fall to reach Saint Julian, though the distance is less than a league."

At Saint Julian the nuns were met by the populace and the priests; the latter bringing with them the apparatus of public worship. They fell on their knees in the fields in adoration of the Cross. But there we must leave them, for they have passed out of the history of Geneva.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE COMING OF CALVIN—HIS EXPULSION—HIS RETURN—THE LAWS WHICH HE INTRODUCED—HIS BATTLE WITH THE LIBERTINS AND FINAL TRIUMPH OVER THEM

We come to Calvin. Few men have been more bitterly abused; few also have less deserved the particular abuse which they have got. He undertook to save Geneva for Protestantism, and he saved it. From the Roman Catholic standpoint, this was heresy and schism—a thing to be denounced; but Protestants, who exult over the achievement of the end, cut an ungracious figure when they come forward with captious criticisms of the means by which it was achieved. It is very unlikely that any other means than those which Calvin adopted would have produced the desired result; and the fact that his measures for the protection of the evangelical religion included the burning of Servetus by no means proves, as some have held that it does, that Calvin was either an abandoned scoundrel or a religious maniac. Like other people, he must be judged by the standards of his period; and the religion of the Middle Ages, whether Catholic or Protestant, mainly consisted of the punishment of heretics. In reconciling sincere piety with savage cruelty Calvin was only acting in accordance with the best theological opinions of his time. But we will deal with this question in more detail when we come to it.

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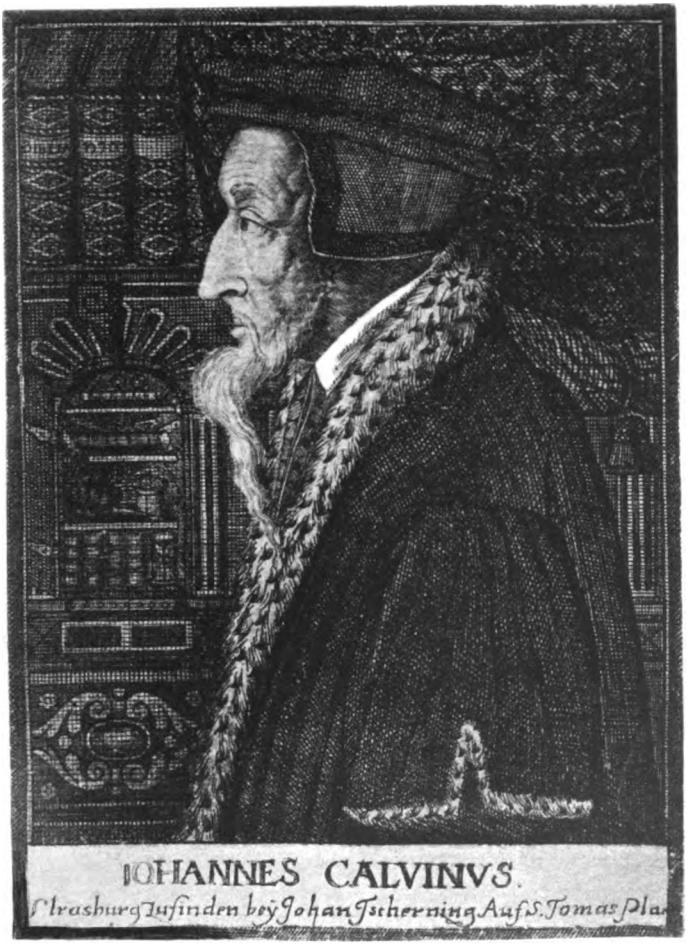


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For the moment, it is enough to explain how Calvin came to Geneva.

He was a Frenchman, from Picardy, born in 1509. Protest against the pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church was to a certain extent traditional in his family. His brother, Charles Calvin, refused the sacraments on his deathbed, and was buried in unconsecrated ground. His father, Gérard Calvin, a notary employed by the clergy of Noyon, was excommunicated for refusing to deliver a proper statement of his accounts—a contribution, albeit a humble one, to the progress of the Reformation. He himself arrived at the Reform by way of the Renaissance, being convinced by the logic of books, and not by the rhetoric of preachers. France, in these circumstances, was no place for him, and though not in any imminent peril of persecution, he decided to go into exile.

His first retreat was to Basle. There he finished and published the book on which he had long been engaged—the famous *Institution of the Christian Religion.* This work of which ten Latin and fifteen French editions appeared during the author's lifetime, attracted immediate attention. When, in 1536, Calvin came to Geneva, with no intention of remaining there, in the course of a journey from Italy to Strasburg, he was already a marked man. Farel, hearing of his arrival, ran to see him, and implored him to stay and help in the moral administration of the City.

Their interview has often been described. It gains in interest when one looks closely at the condition of religious affairs which sent Farel running after Calvin.

The truth is that the Reformation, as the extreme Reformers

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understood it, was just then doing little more than hanging on to Geneva by the eyelids. It was at this period that a deputation of influential citizens waited upon the Council to demand "liberty to live as they chose without reference to what was said by the preachers," and that Jean Balard,[1] speaking on behalf of the Roman Catholics, protested that it was inconsistent with the principle of freedom of conscience which the Reformers themselves professed, to "require the citizens to attend sermons against their will." At the same time, coarse songs and dances, drunkenness, debauchery, and general rowdyism prevailed. It was a state of things eminently calculated to alienate the sympathies of Berne, and invite the deposed Bishops of Geneva and the defeated Duke of Savoy to re-assert their claims. Farel was no more able to control the situation than he had been able to control the Protestant pastor who molested the priests at Yverdon, or the Protestant youths who sang amorous songs on the wall of the Convent of Sainte Claire. Yet it had dawned upon him that the situation must be grappled with, and he ran to Calvin begging that he would grapple with it for him.

One can easily picture the encounter. On the one hand, the noisy, impetuous mob-orator shouting at the top of his voice, brooking no interruption, gesticulating all the time, marking his periods by banging his fist upon the table; on the other hand, the stern silent disciplinarian, listening, weighing the pros and cons, conscious of his powers, but

[1] Jean Balard was Syndic of Geneva in 1529, and author of a *Journal de tout ce qui s'est passé à Genève depuis 1525 jusqu'en 1531*—printed by the *Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève.*

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making light of them, hesitating to assume the burden because he realised how heavy it would prove to be, yet gradually coming round to the view that to carry it was his appointed task in life, and fully resolved that, if he did undertake this talk of subjecting Geneva to religious discipline, his yoke should be heavy, and his foot firm on the necks of the ungodly. It was, no doubt, a long and stormy sitting, with the issue hanging in the balance to the last. But the upshot of it was that, as we all know, Calvin took up the work, and executed it with the thoroughness of a master-craftsman. It is not merely that he found Geneva a bear-garden, and left it a docile school of piety. A more important point is that he did this in such a way as to draw the attention of Europe, and to win the sympathy of so many Protestant principalities and powers that the Duke of Savoy discovered that he could only attack Geneva at his peril.

It was not the work of a day. Calvin began energetically enough, admonishing Bonivard for his familiarity with the servant maid, standing a gambler in the pillory, with a pack of cards hung round his neck, imprisoning a hairdresser for making a client look too beautiful, and endeavouring to make conjugal infidelity ridiculous by obliging the offender to ride round the town on a donkey. Recalcitrants fought stubbornly for the right of "living as they chose without reference to the preachers." The people who wanted to live dissolute lives allied themselves with the people who wanted unleavened bread to be used for the holy Communion; and the coalition was powerful enough to get Calvin and Farel first forbidden to meddle with politics, and then ordered to leave the town within three days.



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Calvin withdrew to Strasburg, where he got married. A letter in which he explained his matrimonial projects to Farel is worth quoting for the sake of the light which it throws upon his character.

"In the midst of these excitements," he wrote, "I have found sufficient leisure to think about getting married. I was offered as a wife a young lady of noble family and better means than mine. Two reasons prevented me from accepting her; she did not know my language, and I was afraid that she would think too much of her birth and breeding. Her brother, a man of much piety, actuated by no motive except affection for myself, pressed me to take her; so did his wife; and I should have had to give way if the Lord himself had not come to the rescue. My answer was that I would go no further in the matter unless the lady undertook to learn my language; she replied that she must take time to think it over. Thereupon I sent an honest man of my acquaintance to look out for another lady. . . ."

It is not the letter of a man who was, or ever had been, or ever would be, in love. But it is the letter of a man who knew exactly what he wanted, and would march straight to his goal, unaffected by any sentimental considerations whatsoever; and a man of that stamp was, at that moment, badly needed in Geneva, where the preachers had given up denouncing vice because, when they did so, the people pelted them with mud, and where an insidious circular letter from Cardinal Sadoleto was reviving the interest of the citizens in the Roman Catholic religion.

This circular letter was Calvin's opportunity. As ardent in controversy as he was cold in love, he picked up the

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gage of battle with a snort of scorn. "Know, O Sadoleto," he wrote, "that, if the Roman Church were really such as you depict it, the Reformers would have had no need to leave its bosom. If the Pope will reject all the ceremonies left unmentioned in your letter, then we will return to him. But, that the fusion of the two Churches may be possible, you must give up all the superstitions that you have grafted on the Gospel: real presence, purgatory, masses for the dead, auricular confession, the celibacy of the priesthood. Of these things you do not speak, though they are the very things that constitute the gulf between us."

It reads like a joyous battle-cry, and it had very much the effect of one. Cardinal Sadoleto was the most formidable Roman Catholic apologist of his age; he had even stood up to Martin Luther. But he and Bishop Pierre de la Baume went down like ninepins before Calvin's onslaught. They did not even venture to reply, but by their silence admitted their defeat; while the Genevans began to realise that they had made a mistake in getting rid of their Reformer. They sent ambassadors to invite him to return and to "stay with them for ever because of his great learning;" they voted him a small but sufficient salary; and they ordered that he should be given a strip of cloth to make him a new gown.

This was in 1541. Before the end of January in the following year, the citizens had, on Calvin's advice, voted an entirely new constitution, entrusting the supervision of their morals, and even of their manners, to the ecclesiastical authorities.

At the head of the hierarchy thus established came the

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Doctors, or Professors of Theology. Next in importance came the Pastors or incumbents of the five parish churches. There were also twelve Ancients—pious laymen answering, to a certain extent, to our Churchwardens—and a number of Deacons, who distributed alms and visited the sick. The Doctors and Pastors, together with the Pastors from the country districts, constituted what was known as the Venerable Company. This body filled up vacancies in the pastorate, subject to the veto of the magistrates and the congregation affected, and also sat in conjunction with the Council to elect the Ancients. The five Pastors and the twelve Ancients combined to form the Consistory, or Court of Ecclesiastical Discipline. The Consistory, which met every Thursday, had power to summon before it any citizen whose conduct was reported to be unsatisfactory. It investigated the case, enquired what the accused had to say for himself, and then reported to the Council which dealt with the matter as it thought fit.

Such, in outline, was the new constitution which Calvin inaugurated. Many volumes, in many languages, have been written about it; but there is no better way of helping the reader to realise it than to recite *verbatim* a selection of the rules for the conduct of life which Calvin framed and the Consistory administered under his guidance. We can quote from a contemporary translation entitled "The Laws and Statutes of Geneva,"[1] and define the Geneva of Calvin's

[1] The Laws and Statutes of Geneva, as well concerning ecclesiastical Discipline, as civill regiment, with certeine Proclamations duly executed, whereby God's religion is most purelie mainteined, and their common wealth quietly governed.

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time as a town in which the following laws, among others, were in force:—

"Item, the watchman shall be night and day in the Steeples of Saint Peter and Saint Gervais, and shall be diligent to espy within and without.

"Item, if it happen any fire in the town, that he which is nearest shall cry with a loud voice to the next houses without sounding his bell.

"Item, in suspect times each shall have a bell and a banner, and if he see any great troop of men, he shall sound his Bell and put his banner that way that they be, to the end that the Porters may be upon their guard, and if need shall be to shut the gates."

This is important. It brings home to us, better perhaps than anything else, how small a place the Geneva of those days was, and how constant was the danger to its independence. We will let that pass, however, and turn to the laws which had a more immediate bearing on the every-day life of the average man—such laws as:—

"Item, that all men ought and are bound to send their children to the Catechism for to be instructed."

"Item, that none shall be so hardy to swear by the name of God upon pain for the first time to kiss the ground; and for the second to kiss the ground and three shillings; for the third time three score shillings,[1] and three days in prison with bread and water; for the fourth time to

Translated out of Frenche into Englishe by Robert Fills. Printed at London by Rowland Hall, dwelling in Gutter Lane, at the sygne of the halfe Egle and the Keye, 1562.

[1] Shillings is the translator's rendering of sous.

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be deprived and banished the town for a year and a day."

"Item, that none shall play or run idly in the streets during the time of Sermons on Sundays, nor days of prayer, nor to open their shops during the sermon time under pain without any favour."

"Item, that no man, of what estate, quality, or condition soever he be, dareth be so hardy to make, or cause to be made, or wear hosen or doublets, cut, jagged, embroidered, or lined with silk, upon pain to forfeit."

"Item, that no Citizen, Burgers, or Inhabitant of this City dareth be so hardy to go from henceforth to eat or drink in any Tavern."

"Item, that none be so hardy to walk by night in the Town after nine of the clock, without candle-light and also a lawful cause."

"Item, that no manner of person, of what estate, quality or condition soever they be, shall wear any chains of gold or silver, but those which have been accustomed to wear them shall put them off, and wear them no more upon pain of three score shillings for every time."

"Item, that no women, of what quality or condition soever they be, shall wear any verdingales, gold upon her head, quoises of gold, billiments or such like, neither any manner of embroidery upon her sleeves."

"Item, that no manner of person, whatsoever they be, making bride-ales, banquets, or feasts shall have above three courses or services to the said feasts, and to every course or service not above four dishes, and yet not excessive, upon pain of three score shillings for every time, fruit excepted."

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"Item, that no manner of men shall go to the baths appointed for women, and also women not to go to those that be appointed for men."

"Item, that no manner of person do sing any vain, dishonest or ribaldry songs, neither do dance, nor make masques, mummeries, or any disguisings in no manner or sort whatsoever it be, upon pain to be put three days in prison with bread and water."

"Item, that all Hosts and Hostesses shall advertise their guests and expressly forbid them not to be out of their lodging after the Trumpet sound to the Watch or ringing of the Bell (which is at 9 of the clock) upon pain of the indignation of the Lords."

"Item, that all Hosts and others shall make their prayers to God, and give thanks before meat and after upon pain of forty shillings and for every time being found or proved, and if the Hosts or Hostesses be found negligent and not doing it, to be punished further as the case requireth."

"Item, that none do enterprise to do, say, nor contract anything out of this City that he dare not do or say within the same concerning the Law of God and Reformation of the Gospel, upon pain to be punished according as the case requireth."

And so forth, and so forth; for the Laws and Statutes of Geneva, with their elaborate provisions for dealing with every imaginable human weakness, cover many closely printed pages. They left little room for the free play of individuality; the idea being to compel every man to conform to the pattern of the pious citizen which had formed itself in the legislator's mind. The citizen who departed, however

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slightly, from that pattern, must march round the town, apologising as he went, or pay a fine, or be imprisoned on a regimen of bread and water, according to the gravity of of the offence. It was an interesting experiment; and in a City which, though only a little larger than Sandwich, contained five Parish Churches, a staff of theological professors, and a large body of laymen to whom theology was three-fourths of life, it could be tried with a fair prospect of success.

We have already seen the discipline in operation to the inconvenience of Bonivard. The Register of the Consistory supplies us with many other instances of citizens punished or reprimanded for peccadilloes which one would have expected the legal maxim *De minimis non curat lex* to cover. One woman, we read, got into trouble for saying her prayers in Latin, and another for wearing her hair hanging down her back. One man was punished for wearing baggy knicker-bockers in the streets; a second for offering his snuff-box to a friend during the sermon; a third for talking business to a neighbour as he was coming out of church; a fourth for calling his cow by the scriptural name Rebecca; a fifth for likening the braying of his donkey to the chaunting of a psalm. There was also a case of a workman whose property was confiscated because he did not relieve the indigence of his aged parents; of a child that was stood in the pillory and publicly whipped for throwing a stone at its mother; of a mother who was imprisoned for carelessly dropping her baby on the floor; and of a young lady who was solemnly arraigned on the charge of casting amorous glances at a minister of the Word.

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It all sounds very ridiculous nowadays, and there is no harm in smiling at it. But to smile is not necessarily to condemn. These vexatious restrictions and capricious penalties were only a means to an end; and the end and the means must stand or fall together. Geneva was just then an armed camp of the Protestant Church militant, and it was supremely important that good moral order should be kept there. Too strict discipline could do little harm, while too lax discipline would almost certainly be fatal It was clear too—or at all events it is clear now in the light of subsequent events—that a certain religious *réclame* was necessary to the preservation of Geneva. Only by presenting certain unique features could it fascinate the attention of the Protestant Powers of Europe, whose moral support was essential to its independence. Calvin probably realised this. At any rate he behaved as if he did. Viewed from this standpoint—as a deliberate bid for *réclame* at an hour when *réclame* of the right sort was the one thing needful—his rapid transformation of Geneva into a religious and moral drill-ground ranks high among instances of statesmanship.

It must be admitted, however, that not all Calvin's contemporaries took this view of his proceedings. Bonivard, it is true, was with him, even going so far as to write a pamphlet in support of the administration which had admonished him from staying away from church. But the Libertins—as those were called who desired to order their lives without reference to the wishes of the preachers—continued to give a great deal of trouble. In a letter to Farel, Calvin complains that they used to set their dogs at him, though it does not appear that he was ever actually

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bitten. The story is also told that their leader, Philibert Berthelier—the son of the Philibert Berthelier who had died for Genevan liberty in 1519—having, as a punishment for some shortcoming, been excluded from the Communion, came into church, drunk, with a gang of boon companions, and demanded that the Sacrament should be administered to him there and then; and even in the Council and the Consistory, the Libertins asserted themselves, and with a brazen cynicism unfolded their views of life.

"Some day," said one of them, "I shall be a Syndic, and then I shall recall all the loose characters whom you have turned out of Geneva, and build houses for them in every corner of the town."

Calvin, however, never flinched before this sort of effrontery. He got Berthelier out of church without permitting him to communicate; and he refused to be brow-beaten in any public assembly. Pierre Amaulx, who said of him that he "thought as much of himself as if he were a Bishop," was compelled to apologise bare-headed, at the Hôtel de Ville, at Molard, and at Saint Gervais; while a woman's angry tirade against him for his tyranny drew from him this characteristic statement of his policy:—

"Your petulance will not prevent the Consistory from doing its duty. If there were as many crowned heads in your family as there are empty heads, you still would not be allowed to hinder the cause of ecclesiastical discipline. Go and build another City if you want to be free to live as you like; but as long as you stay in Geneva it will be in vain for you to try to shake off the yoke of the Gospel."

Nor did the Libertins ever succeed in shaking off the

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yoke of the Gospel, though they tried hard to do so. One of them, Raoul Monnet, was beheaded for inviting young men to look at indecent pictures; and the party was ultimately broken up as the result of a row in the streets. They were very drunk, and were threatening certain of the Reformers with violence, when the Syndic Aubert, hearing their noise, came out and faced them in his night-gown, carrying his staff of office in one hand and a lighted candle in the other. Thus attired and equipped, he placed himself at the head of the Watch, summoned the soldiers to his aid, and put the rioters to rout. Some of them were killed in the scuffle; others were captured, tried, and executed; while the remnant escaped into the country where, for a period, they eked out a precarious existence by means of highway robbery.

Such was the end of Calvin's battle with immorality. His campaigns against heresy remain to be considered.

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## CHAPTER VII

### CALVIN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS HERESY—THE PERSECUTION OF BOLSEC—OF THE ITALIAN FREE-THINKERS—OF JACQUES GRUET—OF SERVETUS

FREE thought was even more obnoxious to Calvin than loose living; and he resolved that there should be as little of it as possible at Geneva. His method of checking it was persecution. It was not, of course, a method of his own invention, but the approved method of his period, and the only method that was in the least likely to be efficacious. For the theory that the best way to suppress free thought is to encourage the free-thinker to argue with you on the chance that you may be able to confute him is fallacious, and even childish. It is a theory which can only hold water on the assumption that all the free-thinkers are fools and all the orthodox apologists intellectual giants—a distribution of intellectual gifts on which it is not quite safe to rely.

Calvin, at all events, clearly perceived the use of persecution in maintaining orthodoxy. He argued with heretics readily enough when he could not deal with them in any other way; and he argued well, though he sometimes missed his point by losing his temper—as when he taunted Castallion with his poverty, and when he told Dr. Blandrata that his ugly face was the outward indication of a loathsome soul. But, other things being equal, he preferred to persecute. Those admirers of his who figure the burning of Servetus

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as an isolated blot upon an otherwise stainless character are very much mistaken. This act was, in reality, the crown and climax of a settled and consistent policy, of which several illustrative examples can be given.

There is the case, for instance, of Bolsec. Originally a monk of the Carmelite Order, he expressed heretical opinions, and fled from France to Ferrara, to escape the terrors of the Inquisition. At Ferrara he married and studied medicine, and in 1551 he came to Geneva with a view of practising his art there. He had hardly settled down there when he was summoned before the Venerable Company for declaring that original sin stood in the following of Adam (as the *Pelagians* do vainly talk) instead of being the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam. Put on his defence, he carried the war into the enemy's camp by accusing Calvin of being the author of the damnable doctrine that God was the real author of the sins of His creatures, and quoting from the famous *Institution* passages which, to the unbiassed critic, certainly do seem to convey that meaning. The theologians of Berne, Basle, and Zurich were consulted as to the punishment that should be meted out to him. Zurich was for burning him alive; but Berne and Basle represented that he was a good man on the whole, and exhorted Calvin to treat him in a spirit of Christian charity. A compromise was, therefore, arrived at. Bolsec was banished, with an intimation that, if he ever returned, he would be whipped round the town. Calvin pursued him with a pamphlet, from which the Council of Geneva required him to eliminate various insulting passages before they would allow it to be

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printed. Bolsec, shortly afterwards, reverted to Roman Catholicism, retaliated by writing a life of Calvin, in which he deliberately confounded the Reformer with a criminal of the same name who had been branded for committing an unnatural offence. It was a pretty quarrel, and it cannot be said that either party to it emerged from it without loss of dignity.

Secondly, there is the case of certain Italian freethinkers. Their names were Alciats, Gentilis, Nicolas Gallo, George Blandrata, Silvestre Tellio, Jean Paul de la Motte, and Hippolyte de Carignan; and their offence consisted in indulging in certain speculations concerning the mutual interdependence of the Three Persons of the Trinity. As soon as Calvin heard what they were doing, he drafted a Confession of Faith, expounding the views of this difficult matter which were approved by the majority, and called upon them to subscribe it. They did so, but Gentilis continued to go about Geneva, discussing the Trinity as if he had done nothing of the kind. He was immediately arrested, and eminent lawyers were consulted as to the punishment which he deserved. They replied that he might without impropriety be burnt, and ought at least to be beheaded. Public opinion, however, declared itself against these penalties; and Gentilis was dressed in a white sheet, compelled to burn his heretical writings with his own hand, and to march round the town, attended by the town-crier, and apologise for his sins outside the Town Hall, and in sundry other public places, and then exiled. His friends fled, fearing a similar fate, and sentence was passed upon two of them in their absence. It was to this effect:—

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"Alciat and Tellio, being rotten and gangrened members of the Republic, are deprived of their rights of citizenship, and banished for ever under pain of death."

They all repaired to Poland, whither we need not follow them; but Gentilis returned to Switzerland some years later under somewhat dramatic circumstances.

It was in 1566—two years after Calvin's death; and his retractation of his opinions had, in the meantime, weighed heavily on his conscience. So he turned up suddenly one day at Gex, in the Canton de Vaud, then under the domination of Berne, and issued a general challenge to a theological debate; proposing the singular condition that any speaker who failed to prove his thesis from Scripture and the Fathers should be put to death. The Bernese, who were very much of Calvin's way of thinking, put Gentilis to death without waiting to hear him argue. He mounted the scaffold courageously, saying that, whereas many martyrs had died for God the Son, he was the first to die for God the Father.

Thirdly, we come to the striking case of Jacques Gruet, in which we see Calvin conducting a persecution in no half-hearted manner, but with all the thoroughness of a Grand Inquisitor.

The trouble began with the discovery, in the pulpit of the Church of Saint Pierre, of a coarse lampoon, apparently directed at a certain fat preacher, formerly a monk, named Abel Poupin, running thus:—

"Pot-belly! You and your gang had better hold your tongues. If you annoy us too much we shall smash you. Take care lest you curse the hour when you unfrocked yourself.... Mark these words and profit by them."

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There is no reason to believe that Gruet was the author of this lampoon. It is admitted that it was not in his handwriting. Suspicion fell upon him, however, and his house was searched. Among other incriminating documents there was found a scrap of paper with the following sentences scrawled upon it.

"The world has neither beginning nor end; Moses could have had no certain knowledge of the things he relates respecting the Creation; there are no such places as Heaven and Hell; man perishes altogether when the body dies; the Christian religion is a fable."

The manuscript was not intended for publication, and there was no evidence that Gruet had ever attempted to disseminate the heretical doctrines expressed in it. Still there was something to go upon. "Now is the moment for energetic action," wrote Calvin to his friend Viret; and his worst enemy cannot deny that his action was energetic. The prisoner's *dossier* was examined, and a previous conviction was discovered. He had been one of a party found guilty of having "danced or looked on at a dance" at a wedding, and sentenced to "'three days' imprisonment followed by a severe reprimand." He had also been named from the pulpit as a bad man and a disgrace to the town.

This too was something; but it was felt that a confession was needed to make the case complete. In order to extract the confession, the torture of the *corde* was applied. It consisted in tying the victim's wrists together behind his back, hauling him up into the air by them by means of a rope passed over a pulley and holding him thus suspended for an indefinite period. For three weeks Gruet was put to

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this agony at frequent intervals. A letter which Calvin wrote to Viret complaining of the want of energy of the torturers [1] proves that he was no helpless spectator of the proceedings, but rather their inspiring genius. They served their purpose; and Gruet having duly confessed, was executed at Champel.

Starting with these stories, we are able to come to the story of Servetus in a proper spirit. Happily the leading facts are not disputed—though a good many of them are ordinarily suppressed by Protestant historians—and it is possible to present them briefly and impartially without fear of contradiction.

Michael Servetus was an eminent Spanish physician, with broad theological views and a turn for disputation. If he is to be labelled, he must be called a pantheist, and though pantheism is nowadays respectable—being in fact, for all practical purposes, accepted by the Broad Church party as the fundamental truth imperfectly symbolised by the articles of the Christian faith—it was so unpopular in the Christian Europe of the Middle Ages, that the man who avowed it carried his life in his hands. Servetus, being aware of this, lived at Vienne, where he practised medicine, under an assumed name; though, at the same time, he engaged, under his own name, in a controversial correspondence with Calvin. He believed that Calvin would respect his secret, and keep faith even with a heretic; but his confidence was his undoing.

The time came when the leaders of religion at Vienne

[1] Grueti negotium syndici protrahunt, senatu invito, nec tamen ut decebat reclamante. Scis enim paucos esse cordatos.



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suspected Servetus of being the author of a more or less heretical work entitled *Christianismi Restitutio;* but absolute proof was not forthcoming. Calvin supplied it. He had already, in a letter to Viret expressed the opinion that Servetus ought to be put to death, saying: "If he comes to Geneva, I will see to it, so far as my influence goes, that he does not leave the town alive." But he was just as willing to see the victim suffer at the hands of Roman Catholics as at those of Protestants. So, the opportunity presenting itself, he sent to the authorities at Vienne a number of letters, which he had received from Servetus with the request that they should be returned, when read, to the writer. That is to say, the Reformer divulged a private correspondence for the express purpose of bringing a heretic to the stake in a country over which he had no jurisdiction. It may be argued that he acted rightly in doing this; but that he did it cannot be denied—though the fact is one of those which some of the most eminent Protestant historians of his complexion have suppressed.

Calvin's evidence secured a condemnation; but Servetus escaped from prison—apparently with the connivance of his goalers, and certainly with the help of a rich citizen whose gratitude he had earned by curing his daughter of a serious malady. Intending to go to Italy, he passed through Geneva on his way, and stayed for a month at the Rose Inn, on the banks of the Lake. As soon as his presence there became known, he was arrested. "It seemed good," say the Registers of the Venerable Company, "to lock him up, in order that he might no longer infect the world with his heresies, seeing that he was a desperate and incorrigible

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character." His trial, condemnation, and execution followed in due course.

There is no space here to follow these proceedings in detail; but it is important to determine Calvin's share in the responsibility. It has been argued by his admirers—the Rev. J. A. Wylie[1] among the number—that he was little more than a passive instrument in the hands of the civil power; but this theory is not borne out by Calvin's letters. We have seen that he had expressed his determination to have Servetus' life if ever Servetus came to Geneva. His correspondence with Viret also tells us how he laboured to achieve that end.

"I will not disguise from you," he wrote, "that it was at my instance that Servetus was arrested here to give an account of his iniquities. Ill-wishers and evil speakers may jabber as they like, but I frankly admit that as, according to the laws and customs of the City, no man can be imprisoned unless complaint is laid against him, I put up a dummy to accuse him." A little later he added, "I hope that the death penalty will be inflicted"; and, years afterwards, he wrote to another correspondent concerning another heretic, "You ought to exterminate such monsters as I exterminated Michael Servetus, the Spaniard."

This is conclusive. The excuses of the Rev. J. A. Wylie are repudiated in advance by the Reformer himself. Servetus' only hope lay in the help of the Libertins; and them Calvin overcame. After their defeat, the issue of the trial was certain; for the Churches of Berne, Basle, and Zurich,

[1] In his very popular "History of Protestantism," published by Messrs. Cassell.

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whose advice was also asked, returned answers of truly Delphic ambiguity, leaving the Genevans a perfectly free hand.

So the end came. Calvin visited Servetus in his prison, and assured him that there was "nothing personal" in his attack upon him; we are not permitted to know whether he was conscious of the irony contained in such a remark at such a time. He had hardly withdrawn when the Lieutenant of Justice entered, bidding the prisoner:—

"Come with me and hear the good pleasure of My Lords."

He led him through the streets to the open space in front of the Hôtel de Ville, where Syndic Darlod read him the sentence. It began with a formal recital of the counts in the indictment, and ended thus:—

"Having God and the Holy Scriptures before our eyes, speaking in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we deliver this our definite sentence: You, Michael Servetus, shall be bound, and led to the place called Champel, and there, chained to a pillar, shall be burnt alive, together with your books and your writings, until your body is reduced to ashes, and thus shall you end your days, as an example to others who may be tempted to commit your crime."

Mob-orator Farel, now getting an old man, was there. He had hurried from Neuchâtel[1] on hearing that there was

[1] Farel had left Geneva soon after Calvin was established there, and preached mainly at Neuchâtel, where he organised ecclesiastical discipline somewhat on Calvin's lines, though less rigorous, but also at Metz, and Grenoble. In 1557, at the age of 69, he married a young woman, Marie Torel of Rouen, and he died, at the age of 77, in 1565.

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a chance to see the burning of a heretic, and he seems to have enjoyed himself thoroughly. It was his privilege to accompany the prisoner to the place of execution; a Syndic, and a Lieutenant, on horseback, leading the way, and a mob of sightseers following behind. The distance was a couple of miles or so; and as the procession slowly took its way, out through the gate of Saint Antoine and across the fields, the preacher, with his voice of thunder, continually exhorted his victim to recant. His supreme moment was when Servetus, catching his first glimpse of the funeral pile prepared for him, threw himself upon the ground in a sudden agony of terror. Then Farel turned in triumph to the crowd, exclaiming:—

"See what a power Satan has when he takes possession of a man! This is a learned doctor, and that which has befallen him may befall any one of you."

But Servetus rose, and, with a last effort, pulled himself together. They chained him to the stake, and put a lighted torch to the firewood; and in about half an hour all was over. Philip Melancthon, shortly afterwards, wrote to congratulate Calvin on his achievement. It ought to be, he said, an excellent advertisement for Geneva.

Such are the facts. One need not comment on them at any length; and it would be unnecessary to comment on them at all if it were not for the purpose of confounding what may be called the "deplorable incident" theory of the majority of Calvin's Protestant biographers.

On the one hand, such writers as Bungener and Mr. Wylie tell us that the burning of Servetus cannot be defended; and, on the other hand, they tell us that Calvin, who brought

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it about, was a great Christian teacher, whose memory should be revered by Protestants. It is obvious that the two propositions are mutually destructive; for the conception of a pious and godly man who, by an error of judgment or a lapse from grace, goes out of his way to cause a fellow-creature to be undeservedly burnt alive is one which a normal intelligence is powerless to grasp. Nor is the matter mended by the representation of some of the biographers that Servetus was a particularly cantankerous unbeliever. For this is to suggest that, though the burning of heretics is unjustifiable, the burning of those who argue out of season is legitimate.

It must be added that—as has already been made clear—Calvin himself never regarded the act for which his panegyrists apologise as a thing to be considered apart from his career as a whole. On the contrary, he intrigued for the opportunity of doing it and gloried in it, and accepted congratulations upon it, after it was done. Nor can the plea—so eloquently urged by the Rev. J. A. Wylie—that Calvin tried to get the milder punishment of decapitation substituted for that of burning, be admitted as an extenuating circumstance. Such force as it seems, at the first blush of the thing, to have, depends upon the suppression of material facts. These facts are that Calvin did all that it was in his power to do to get Servetus burnt at Vienne; that his alleged objections to the burning at Geneva did not extend to the point of staking his resignation on their acceptance; that he accepted Melancthon's congratulations on it immediately afterwards; and that he never expressed the least regret for it in later life. We may take it, therefore, that any qualms which he

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exhibited were the outcome of purely prudential considerations; that he was not quite sure whether the candle which it was proposed to light would be a good advertisement for Geneva or not. When he discovered that it was, no further qualms appear to have troubled him.

It follows that Protestant critics of his career are in a dilemma. It is open to them to rejoice over him as a stalwart who stuck at nothing which would enable him to preserve their faith in its integrity—a reasonable course if they believe their faith to be necessary to the salvation of other people's souls; and it is also open to them to repudiate him as a Christian teacher, and execrate his memory as they execrate the memories of Philip of Spain, Ignatius Loyola, and the Bloody Mary, and Catherine de Medici. But they cannot try to steer a middle course, without making themselves ridiculous, and giving the enemy occasion to blaspheme.

This, however, is theology—a subject to be avoided as much as possible. One turns with relief to another feature of the Calvinistic regime at Geneva—to the hospitable entertainment of those distinguished strangers who had no desire to undermine the Genevan religion, and whom Calvin had no desire either to torture or to burn.

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# CHAPTER VIII

## DISTINGUISHED STRANGERS AT GENEVA—OLIVETAN—CLEMENT MAROT—JOHN KNOX—THE GENEVA BIBLE—THE DEATH OF CALVIN—AN ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER

FROM the Reformation onwards the history of Geneva is largely the history of distinguished strangers who settled in or near the City. Farel was a Frenchman; so was Calvin; so was de Bèze—of whom, as Calvin's successor, we shall have to say more presently. Viret [1] came from Orbe, and Froment [2]

[1] Pierre Viret (1511—1571) was converted at Paris by Farel. He preached the Gospel successfully at Orbe, Grandson, and Payerne. He took part, at Geneva, in the debate which resulted in the abolition of the mass, and was accounted the most persuasive of the Reformers. He tried unsuccessfully to establish a Calvinistic regime at Lausanne, but the Bernese would not have it, and he returned to Geneva. He left Geneva because of the climate in 1563, and the Queen of Navarre made him professor of Theology at Orthez, where he died.

[2] Antoine Froment (1510—1585) preached the Gospel in Geneva, as we have seen, before the Reformation. From 1537 to 1552 he was pastor of the church of Saint Gervais, but was ejected on account of the misconduct of his wife. To console himself he took to drink and dissipation, with the result that he was banished from the town, to which he did not return till 1572. He wrote *Les Actes et les Gestes merveilleux de la cité de Genève, nouvellement convertie à l'Evangile,* which he could not get printed, but which has since been published with an introduction by M. Gustave Revilliod.

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from Yvonand. But there are other strangers who demand attention, though they only sojourned in Geneva temporarily. One may speak first of Olivétan—famous for his translation of the Bible—though he had come and gone before the Reformers seized the reins of government.

He had come to Geneva as their representative, and found employment there as a tutor. His instructions were to spread the light discreetly, but his idea of discretion proved to be somewhat crude. An attack on the Lutherans, delivered from the pulpit of one of the churches, so excited him that he sprang to his feet and interrupted the discourse with an offer to take the preacher's place and refute him there and then. This naturally provoked a riot, and it was as much as his friends could do to get him out of the town alive. He repaired to Neuchâtel, where he occupied himself with the more pacific, but not less useful task of translating the Bible into French. Being but an indifferent Greek and Hebrew scholar, he used what school boys would call a "crib", in the shape of the earlier French version executed by Lefèvre d'Etaples,[1] and so got his work finished in about a year. His dedication of it from the "poor and humble author" to the "poor little Church of Jesus Christ" may

[1] Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples (1455—1537) was hardly a Protestant, though, in his own way, a reformer. He approved of the celibacy of the clergy, and of the monasteries, but he also held that questions of dogma should be settled by reference to the Scriptures, and to this end he translated them. The translation of the New Testament began to appear in 1523; that of the Old Testament in 1528; and the first edition of the complete Bible was published at Antwerp in 1530.

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be taken as acquitting him of any charge of overweening spiritual pride in his performance. The Protestants of the Vaudois valleys of Piedmont, among whom he had sojourned, paid for the printing of the translation, which was well received. And there Olivétan may be left.

A more distinguished—and also a more interesting—stranger was Clément Marot, the illustrious poet, and author of the first metrical version of the Psalms.

Clément Marot was born about 1495, and put to the study of the law; but he neglected the law for poetry, and found a patron in Francis I, with whom he was present, first, at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and then at the battle of Pavia, where he was taken prisoner. Though there is no evidence that he ever had any religious prejudices of any kind whatsoever, a lady, of whose cool reception of his amorous advances he had complained in mordant verse, accused him of heresy, and he found himself locked up in the Châtelet. Royal influence secured his release; and after various vicissitudes with which we need not concern ourselves, he produced his metrical version of the Psalms.

It must be noted that he produced it purely as a poet, and in no sense as a theologian. He perceived the beauty of the Psalms of David, and he believed he could make them popular. Nor was he mistaken. The Psalms, under his auspices, achieved a vogue which is almost without parallel in the history of literature—a vogue of which one finds only a faint echo in that of such a collection of songs as "Barrack Room Ballads." On this point let his biographer, Florimond de Rémont, speak:—

"They were not then set to music, as they are nowadays,

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to be sung at church; but everyone fitted to them any air he chose—as a rule the air of some gay and frivolous song. Each of the princes and members of the Court selected a psalm for himself. King Henry II selected as his the Psalm *Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks*, and sang it when he was out hunting. Madame de Valentinois, his mistress, selected *Lord, I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks*, which she sang to the air of an old dance. The Queen chose, *O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation*, which she sang to a song of the jesters. Antony King of Navarre selected *Give sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people*, and sang it to a rollicking tune of Poitou. The other members of the Court did likewise."

It seems singular that such a poetical exercise should have been considered a presumption of heresy; but it was so, and a Roman Catholic Historian, Lenglet du Fresnoy, tells us why. It tended, he says, to make the common people too intimately acquainted with Holy Writ. So the word was passed round that Clément Marot was a Huguenot; and a rumour that the police had searched, or were about to search, his house sent him flying post-haste to Geneva.

He was well received there; he printed his psalms there; he had the opportunity of hearing them in choirs and places where they sing. But though Calvin liked him, and admired his psalmody, he was not happy under Calvin's discipline. He had to hand over his sword on his arrival, was forbidden to be out after nine o'clock at night, or to drink anything stronger than the red wine of the country; while his inn-keeper saw to it that he began no meal until he had asked a blessing on it. The story goes that he repaid this atten-

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tion by making love to the innkeeper's wife, and was whipped round the town by way of punishment. It must be allowed that nothing that is known about him makes the story of his misconduct incredible, and that the reported penalty was in keeping with Genevan notions of justice. As we have seen, an even sterner fate overtook the paramour of the fourth Madame Bonivard. The evidence, however, is inadequate, and the story is probably untrue. All that can be said for certain to the poet's discredit is that he was sent to prison for playing a game of backgammon with the Prisoner of Chillon; and this is apparently the incident which M. de Bèze had in his mind when he summed him up in the scathing sentence:—

*Mores parum Christianos ne in extrema quidem aetate emendavit.*

It is a hard saying—though the fact that M. de Bèze was Marot's unsuccessful rival in psalmody may partially explain it—and we cannot wonder that the poet made haste to leave a city in which so little latitude was allowed to men of genius.

Such were the principal French visitors; a further contingent was supplied by Italy. Some of these, as we have seen, abandoned themselves to the habit of free-thought and got into trouble in consequence. Others became blameless citizens and even blameless pastors. They made so little noise in the world, however, that it is unnecessary to mention them, though we shall presently have the pleasure of making the acquaintance of some of their descendants. For the moment, we may pass on to the distinguished strangers who came from England.

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These were, almost without exception, religious refugees who had left their country in consequence of the persecutions of the Bloody Mary—because, as one of their number, William Whittingham, subsequently Dean of Durham, put it, "The Whore of Rome is again erected amongst us." Most of them had, in the first instance, settled at Frankfort, but had moved on when they found themselves on the losing side in a dispute on a point of ritual between Mr. Knox and Mr. Cox. Some of them were able to hire houses; others boarded in the families of hospitable citizens; and—roughly speaking—from 1556 to 1559 they formed such a notable and learned English colony as has never, either before or since, established itself in any Continental city. Bishops, Deans, Regius Professors of Divinity, the Heads of Colleges and Halls, to say nothing of baronets, knights, country gentlemen, and parish priests evicted from their benefices—all these, to the number of some hundreds, were to be met, every day in the week, in the streets of this town, a little larger than Bideford, and a little smaller than Barnstaple. Let us recall the names of some of the most eminent of them.

We have Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, whom Queen Mary had imprisoned, but afterwards released at the instance of the King of Denmark; John Scorye, Bishop of Rochester; Thomas Sampson, Dean of Chichester; Lawrence Humfrey, President of Magdalen College, Oxford; Thomas Lever, Master of St. John's College, Cambridge; Mistress Elizabeth Sandes, "gentlewoman waiter" to Queen Elizabeth in the Tower; John Pullein, Rector of St. Peter's, Cornhill; Christopher Goodman, afterwards minister of St. Andrews; Anthony

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Gilby, afterwards minister of Ashby de la Zouche; William Kethe, composer of "All people that on earth do dwell," and also of "A Ballet, declaringe the fal of the Whore of Babylone, intytuled Tye thy Mare Tom-boye"; and John Knox, the illustrious Scotch Reformer. A goodly company in very truth, and a list to which, if it were needful, many noteworthy additions could be made.

John Knox, unhappily, is the only one of these celebrities who has recorded his impressions of Geneva during this eventful period. He writes of it as:—

"This place where I fear nor ashame to say is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the Apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be Truly preached; but manners and religion so sincerely reformed I have not yet seen in any other place beside."

It is an affecting picture—as far as it goes; and it moves us the more when we remember that the Reformer did not dwell in this earthly Paradise alone, but enjoyed in it what his biographer, Dr. M'Crie, calls "the endearments of domestic happiness." He had with him, in fact, not only his wife, but also his mother-in-law, Mrs. Bowes, who had deserted her husband in order to be with him, and another married lady, Mrs. Locke, who had made a similar sacrifice for his sake.

Thus assured of an abundance of the "endearments" which he valued, John Knox consecrated his days to literary toil. His powers of mental abstraction were such that his beautiful surroundings and happy circumstances influenced neither his choice of a subject nor his treatment of it. With the blue waters of the Lake spread before his feet, and the

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white snows sparkling on the distant hills,—and with three devout women, two of them his neighbours' wives, ready to love, honour, and obey him,—he sat down and wrote: "The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women." And no doubt, one evening, at the hour when it was forbidden to be abroad, but before the hour of family prayer had come, he snuffed the candle, and read aloud to the devoted trio the splendidly purple passage in which he declares that:—

"To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion, or empire, above any realm, nation, or city, is repugnant to nature, contumely to God, a thing most contrarious to His approved will, and approved ordinance; and finally it is the subversion of all equity and justice."

To visualise that scene is, in a measure, to realise John Knox; but, to make the portrait complete, one must add a word concerning his spiritual pride in his intellectual performance. The First Blast, it will be remembered, though blown with reference to Queen Mary, jarred upon the ears of Queen Elizabeth, with the result that, when the trumpeter wanted to go to England, obstacles were put in his way. He ultimately admitted, with pompous circumlocution, that the exaltation natural to a pamphleteer had caused him to confound the general with the particular; but, in the meantime, he wrote haughtily:—

"My First Blast hath blown from me all my friends in England.... England hath refused me; but because, before, it did refuse Jesus Christ, the less do I regard the loss of this familiarity."

The two utterances, placed side by side, show a certain

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inconsistency; but John Knox was far from being the most consistent of the Reformers.

It has been said that John Knox was also engaged—in such leisure as the domestic affections, his duties as pastor of the English Church, and the task of composing the First Blast allowed him—in collaborating in that translation of the Scriptures which resulted in the publication, in 1560, of the Geneva Bible; but this is more than doubtful. That he was ready, and even forward, with suggestions seems likely enough from what we know of him; but his scholarship can hardly have counted among a company of scholars including Regius Professors and the Heads of Colleges and Halls; and these, in all probability, proceeded with their work without much reference to him. We know, at all events, that the moving spirits in the undertaking were Whittingham, Pullein, Dr. Cole, Sampson, and John Bodley.[1] Their version appeared "with most profitable annotations," in 1560; Whittingham, and one or two others, remaining at Geneva, after Elizabeth's accession, in order to finish it. The Queen gave John Bodley the exclusive right of printing it for a period of seven years. It became very popular—partly, perhaps, because it was issued conveniently in *quarto*, whereas the older versions had been in folio; and it is perhaps unnecessary to add that it was the version which we know to-day by the familiar title of the Breeches Bible, because it represents that our first parents made themselves breeches, instead of aprons, of their fig-leaves.

[1] The father of Thomas Bodley, founder of the Bodleian library at Oxford. Thomas, a lad of twelve, was with him.

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When the task was finished, and the work duly issued, with the imprint of Rowland Hall, Whittingham and his friends returned to England. Their departure is noted in an important entry in the Register of the Genevan Council. We read:—

"William Whittingham, citizen, in own name and that of his company, came to thank the magistrates for the kind treatment they have received in this city, and to state that they are required to return to their own country, in order to minister to the Church there; but that they entreated their worships still to regard them as humble servants of the Republic, and promised that, in everything and every place, wherever they might have the means of doing service, either to the State, or to any inhabitants of this City, they would exert themselves to the utmost of their power. They requested too a certificate of their life and conversation during their residence in this City, and gave in a register [1] of those of their countrymen who came to dwell therein, by way of a perpetual remembrance.

"It was decreed that they should have honourable license to depart, together with a testimonial of the satisfaction we have had in them; and that they be exhorted to pray for us, and to act in their turn towards foreigners as we have done to them; that they be always disposed to look with affection upon this City; and that those who are now citizens or subjects be still regarded as such for the time to come."

[1] This register, known as the Livre des Anglois is still preserved at Geneva. It was printed in London, with a few biographical notes, by John Southerden Burn, in 1831.



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So the colony broke up; and the English scholars at the "perfect school of Christ," withdrew, and, rejoicing in this generous testimonial to their good conduct, hired post-chaises and bowled home. Calvin—with whom they alone among the distinguished strangers had lived in perfect amity—survived them by some four years.

He suffered from a variety of disagreeable diseases—asthma, quartan ague, gout, and stone; but the real malady which, so to say, coupled up all his other ailments, and hastened the inevitable end, was over-work. No man of his generation worked harder or more incessantly.

We have considered Calvin, so far, mainly as the disciplinarian of Geneva; but to look at him in this light alone is to do him an injustice. He was the assiduous adviser of the Council in matters of trivial, as well as of serious import; he decided for them, not only whether Bonivard's Chronicles of Geneva should be printed, but also whether a dentist should be allowed to practise in the City. He organised the Protestant Church of France; he founded the Academy of Geneva; he preached continually; he lectured on divinity. And, with all this, he wrote ninety-six books, had a finger in every controversy; and carried on a voluminous correspondence (sometimes in French and sometimes in Latin) with prominent Protestants in all parts of Europe. It would have been a great record for a hale and hearty centenarian; it is a tremendous record for an invalid who died at fifty-five.

The beginning of the end was an attack of hemorrhage while in the pulpit. After that seizure, Calvin clearly understood that his period of usefulness was over, and that it only remained for him to say farewell to those whom he must

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leave. His wife and his only child had died before him; but there were last words to be said to the leaders of both Church and State. The magistrates and the ministers both visited him in his bed-chamber. He spoke to them, de Bèze tells us, "as a true prophet, protesting the truth of the doctrine he had taught them, and assuring them that they need have no fear of storms in the times to come if they followed in the path which he had shown them and went on from well to better." Finally, Farel—now in his seventy-fifth year—came to see him; the old man is said to have walked all the way from Neuchâtel. He had been associated with Calvin in a great and enduring work, and also, as we have seen, in a signal act of persecution. They must have had much to talk of—many memories to revolve—there, in the valley of the Shadow. One would be glad to know whether their joint treatment of Servetus was one of the things of which they deemed it needful to implore divine forgiveness at the last, or whether they rejoiced over it as a day's work to be proud of, or whether they never thought of it at all. But the veil cannot be pierced, and the secrets of that strange colloquy cannot be known. We only know that, shortly after Farel left him, Calvin died, and that, when one has duly weighed and considered all the facts, it is still hard to make up one's mind what manner of man he really was.

Admiration, of course, cannot be withheld from him in any case. He was a strong man—though, on his death-bed, he protested that he was by nature timid, and gave God the glory for his strength; he set out to do a difficult thing, and he did it thoroughly—how thoroughly one can still

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see in Geneva at this present hour. One may smile at the means which he adopted; but one can only ridicule them, on condition that one is also prepared to ridicule the end which they achieved. He treated the Genevans like children in order to train them to be men. He had the genius to persuade them—or at all events to persuade a working majority of them—to consent to be so treated; and there can be little doubt that, by so persuading them, he preserved for them alike their religion and their independence, and kept out the Duke of Savoy. This alone suffices to stamp him as a great man—one of the greatest in history.

Whether he was also a good man is another, and a more complicated question. The answer to it must necessarily depend upon whether one is prepared to go the whole way with him, and say that he did rightly in torturing and burning those who denied the Trinity. For he certainly did not burn or torture them by accident; and it is clearly unjust to estimate a man's character without reference to outrages (if they are allowed to be such) which he deliberately planned, deliberately carried out, and did not subsequently repent of. When the popular historians of Protestantism attempt to do this, they merely insult the intelligence of their readers; and when they talk glibly of judging Calvin according to the standard of his times, they forget that some of the best men of his times—including sundry of his own theological opponents—such men as Castalion, for example, whom Calvin called a "blackguard" for objecting to the burning of Servetus—already took the modern view of persecution.

It follows that the most that Protestant historians are

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entitled to say (unless they approve of the treatment of Gruet and Servetus) is that Calvin was a bad man whom God, in His infinite wisdom, used as an instrument of good. Such men are not by any means unknown to history, and many great men have been included in the category. Calvin was one of the greatest of them. One need not think the less of him because he did not claim to be great, but to be good. His belief in his own goodness was one of the springs of his influence, and consequently one of the elements of his greatness. His death left a gap, which Geneva found it difficult to fill.

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# CHAPTER IX

## CALVIN SUCCEEDED BY M. DE BÈZE—HIS EARLY UNREGENERATE DAYS—HIS LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS—HIS VIGOROUS CHARACTER—THE PLAGUE AT GENEVA—THE REFUGEES FROM THE MASSACRE OF SAINT BARTHOLOMEW

None of the surviving reformers of Calvin's own generation were able and willing to succeed him. Viret had left Geneva to live in the South of France for the benefit of his health; Froment had been banished from the City for indecent behaviour; Farel was old and feeble and had, in fact, only another year to live. The choice fell, therefore, on M. de Bèze—or de Besze as he usually subscribed himself when he did not latinise his name as Beza. He was already the Rector of Calvin's new University, and he now became the President of the Venerable Company, and the recognized leader of the French Protestants in Europe—a position which he maintained until his death, at the age of 84, in 1605.

If it were necessary to label M. de Bèze one might, perhaps, describe him as the Gentleman Reformer. He came of a good old Burgundian family, and had been a man of the world before he became a man of God; but a good deal of unnecessary nonsense has been written about his doings in his unregenerate days. His conduct, in his youth, was probably better rather than worse than that of the majority of young men; the diligence with which he pursued his

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studies proves that his alleged dissipations cannot have amounted to much. A certain number of Roman Catholic calumniators have accused him of writing indecent Latin verses; and a certain number of Protestant writers, accepting the Roman Catholic estimate of the verses, have apologised for them. If they had taken the trouble to read them, they would have perceived that there was nothing to apologise for. The *Poemata* of which the first edition appeared at Paris in 1548, are fairly harmless, and might safely be put into the hands of school boys—far more safely, indeed, than a good deal of Horace, Juvenal, Ovid, or Catullus. It was not until M. de Bèze found religion, and became a Protestant pamphleteer, that his style began to be disfigured by improprieties.

The allegations against his private character also, to some extent, fall to pieces on investigation. There does not seem to be any truth in the statement of the Jesuit Maimbourg that he had a love affair with the wife of a tailor. On the other hand, it is not disputed that he contracted what he called a "mariage de conscience" with a young woman of humble station. Translated into plain English this means, of course, that under promise of marriage, he took advantage of the young woman's innocence; and it has to be admitted that he allowed four years to pass without displaying any anxiety to carry his promise into effect. In 1548, however, he fell dangerously ill, with the result that his conscience began to trouble him. He resigned his position in France, adopted the reformed religion, took his mistress, Claudine Demorse, to Geneva, was duly united to her in the bonds of holy matrimony, and lived

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happily with her for forty years—at the end of which time she died and M. de Bèze took a second wife at the age of sixty-nine.

His life was rich, and full, and interesting; his performance of his public duties as Professor of Greek at the Academy of Lausanne, and subsequently as Rector of the Academy of Geneva represents only one department of his manifold activities. His distinguished and conciliatory manners, and the knowledge of good society which he had acquired in his unregenerate days, made him the most eligible of Protestant Ambassadors; and in that capacity he went on several diplomatic journeys—to France, to German Switzerland and elsewhere. He also preached innumerable sermons, and wrote many books; no less than 87 being mentioned in Haag's *La France Protestante.* Yet, in spite of his hard work—and it is recorded that, at one time, when the University Chest was empty, he acted as *locum tenens* for all the other professors—he kept his health, and, above all, his high spirits. His fellow-citizens were so delighted with his jollity that it became a saying in Geneva that it would be better to go to Hell with de Bèze than to go to heaven with Calvin. One suspects even a twinkle in his eye and a chuckle in his sleeve when the Reformer who had betrayed a girl under promise of marriage wrote of the rival Reformer who had played backgammon in an inn, the famous: *Mores parum Christianos ne in extrema quidem ætate emendavit.*

One may take a cursory glance—there is no space for more—at M. de Bèze's literary performances. His distinguishing characteristic as a man of letters was, without doubt,

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his versatility. He versified the Psalms. *Croyant que Dieu se plait au mauvais vers* is Voltaire's malicious explanation of the enterprise; but his rhymes are very far from being so bad as that. He engaged in biblical criticism—a task upon which he brought great resources of classical scholarship to bear. His life of Calvin is a work that still lives and deserves to live; it is sympathetic, vivid, dramatic; no later biography has really superseded it; and if it had been written in some language more generally understood than Latin, there would have been little need, from the point of view of the average Protestant, for any other to be written. He was also vigorous in controversy; though his Treatise Concerning the Punishment of Heretics by the Civil Magistrates (written to justify the burning of Servetus) proves too much, and might be used, without any addition of casuistry, to justify the burning of Protestants by the Bloody Mary or any other Catholic Ruler.

Finally M. de Bèze could unbend, and distinguish himself as a writer of farce and burlesque. Together with Henri Estienne, the printer, and some other humourists, he was engaged in the composition of a satire called *Cuisine Papale* or the "Pope's Kitchen." As a sample of the humour of this work we may quote the passage in which President Lizet, burner of heretics, bewails the loss of his nose:—

O nose that must with drink be dyed,
O nose, my glory and my pride,
O nose that didst enjoy a-right,
Nose, my alembic of delight,
My bibulous big bottle nose
As highly coloured as the rose,

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It was my hope that thou wouldst share
My shifting fortunes everywhere.
A Churchman's nose thou wast indeed,
The partner of his prayers and creed,
Proof against all doctrinal shocks,
And never aught but orthodox.

Let this suffice. It is not very elegant fooling; the most indulgent critic cannot claim that it is either dignified or witty. It can only be defended on the ground that the taste of the period was coarse, and that it does even the most serious of men good to unbend from time to time, and that there is a touch of nature in the buffoonery which helps us to realise that M. de Bèze was a human being of like passions with ourselves.

This condescension, moreover, to the level of the vulgar was rare with M. de Bèze—at all events in his later life. The period of his importance in Geneva was a dark and troubled period. Gaiety was quenched by many difficulties and perils: by an appalling and protracted epidemic of the plague; by the massacre of Saint Bartholomew and the consequent incursion of impoverished refugees; and by critical dissensions with France and with Savoy. In all these matters we shall find M. de Bèze playing his part manfully without the most distant suggestion of the buffoon. Let the epidemic of the plague be taken first.

One knows Geneva, nowadays, as a clean city and a health resort. In the Middle Ages, as we have seen in previous chapters, it was a filthy city; and the plague—that curse of the Middle Ages everywhere—did not spare it. Of the earliest ravages of the malady we have no record; but it

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bursts upon us as a well-known and dreaded disease in an official record of the year 1454, when we find Thomas de Sur, the Bishop's man of business, issuing an order that "all persons who have sufferers from the disorder living with them must turn them out of doors, and must themselves shut up their houses and retire from the town."

The Council protested against the edict, on the ground of humanity, and went so far as to lay their protest before the Pope; but the result of their representations is not known. What we do know is that the decree did not effect the extinction of the disease, seeing that, in 1482, a hospital for the plague-stricken was built at Plainpalais. It contained eleven wards, and twenty-three beds, and patients were so numerous that several of them often had to share a bed. Physicians, we are told, were willing enough to go there and attend them, but priests could with difficulty be got to minister to their spiritual needs. No fewer than nine remonstrances on this head appear in the Register of the Council between the years 1494 and 1498, and this remarkable resolution was passed, at the beginning of one of the epidemics, by the canons of the Cathedral of Saint Pierre:—

"In view of the fact that the plague is suspected to exist in the town, the reverend fathers vote themselves a month's holiday from the duty of residing there and attending to the services; their stipends, in the meantime, to continue to be paid."

The month's holiday, we also gather, was subsequently extended to a year, with the same liberal stipulation as to emoluments. When the danger was over, the priests returned.

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In 1530 there was a fresh outbreak which had the useful practical effect of preventing the Duke of Savoy from asserting his suzerainty over the City. In 1542 came the first epidemic after the Reformation; and this time it is the Protestant pastors whom the Registers of the Council accuse of cowardice. The entry is to this effect:—

"The ministers appeared before the Council confessing that it was their duty to go and offer consolation to the sufferers from the plague, but that not one of them had the courage to do so. They begged the Council to overlook their weakness, seeing that God had not given them the grace to brave and overcome the peril with the intrepidity required—always excepting Matthew Geneston, who is quite willing to go, if the lot should fall upon him."

Matthew Geneston went, and caught the plague, and died of it; his wife accompanied him, and shared his fate. Let their names be recorded as those of humble heroes who recognized the path of duty, and followed it without vanity or any blare of trumpets. As regards the others, the fact must also be recorded, for what it may be worth, that three of them were afterwards banished from Geneva—two [1] for immorality and the third [2] for fraud. Calvin himself, it appears, was requested by the Council not to go, on the ground that the Town could not afford to lose him, and acquiesced in their decision without raising difficulties.

Finally, we come to the epidemic which raged at the time when M. de Bèze was a power in Geneva. It seems to have been the worst of all the epidemics; from 1568 to 1572,

[1] The brothers Champereau. [2] Phillippe de Ecclésia.

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the Register of the Council is full of references to it. We read of many fatuous precautions to prevent the disease from spreading; sufferers were ordered not to open their windows; convalescents were enjoined to carry white sticks when they went abroad, in order that they might be recognized and avoided; it was forbidden to eat fruit or to take a bath, as this was believed to be a means of taking the infection. We have a note on hospital reform: It was ordered that male and female patients should be treated in separate wards, in order that certain scandals might be prevented. We find a doctor reprimanded for doing his duty negligently: "The Sieur Bauhin, plague-doctor, is ordered to see his patients in their houses instead of being satisfied with having them brought to the window for a consultation." Finally we read that "The Council, at the request of the Ministers, orders all the citizens to frequent the sermons with assiduity, in order to turn away the wrath of God which would appear, from the continuance of the plague, to be violently aroused against the Town."

It was a terrible time, and M. de Bèze, the Gentleman Reformer, did his duty as a gentleman should and would. His desire was to devote himself to the task of comforting the sick like the humblest pastor of them all. Again and again we find his comrades restraining him on the ground that the *rôle* of the general in command is other than that of the private soldier; and again and again we find M. de Bèze trying to break away and plunge into the thickest of the battle.

"Though M. de Bèze," we read, "vehemently insisted that he should not be exempted from the duty of comforting

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the plague-stricken, his colleagues refused to grant his request—not because they wish to spare him, but because they must keep him among them as long as God will let them."

And this is only one of many records that might be quoted to make the memory of M. de Bèze revered.

The plague was still lingering in Geneva when the news of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew arrived. It was brought on August 30, 1572, by merchants from Lyon, who left their waggons and wares at their inn, and hurried to the Hôtel de Ville to have speech with the magistrates. They knew nothing of what had happened at Paris, but what had happened in the provinces was terrible enough.

"My lords," they announced, "there has been a terrible massacre of our brethren of the reformed faith at Lyon. In every town that we have passed through on our way here we have seen their scaffolds raised. Blood is flowing there like water, and it is said to be the same throughout the whole of France. To-morrow, or the day after, the fugitives who have escaped from the butchery will begin to come to you."

The Genevans rose to the occasion. Carts were sent out to Gex to receive the weary and the wounded; pastors were despatched to the frontier to watch for them. The women made the houses ready to entertain them hospitably. Sermons, moreover, were preached on the new duties which the emergency entailed; and M. de Bèze himself, who had a special sympathy with the Huguenots in that he had attended their synods and helped them to draw up their confession of faith, faced the situation in a memorable discourse. The

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city itself, he admitted, was in peril; but the citizens must be strong and of a good courage, and prepared to suffer for the good cause if God so willed. In the meanwhile, to nerve themselves, let them decree a special day of prayer and fasting.

So the Genevans fasted and prayed; and, on the 1st day of September, the arrival of the long train of fugitives began. They were truly fugitives rather than immigrants; that is to say, they had fled empty-handed, travelled in hourly terror of their lives, and arrived in a state of utter destitution. Let it be added that there were 2,300 of them, and that contemporary statistics show that there were in Geneva, at that period, only 1,200 householders. Imagining the sudden influx of 2,300 paupers into a town of the size of Sandwich, one begins to realise the economic situation thus created. To realise it completely one must further remember that Geneva was already on the verge of bankruptcy; and that a collection, for the benefit of the fugitives, which realised 4,000 livres, so exhausted the resources of the Town that the proposal to make a second collection had to be abandoned.

Severe economy was naturally the order of the day. The only recorded example of public extravagance during this period is an order that, as the chairs in the Council Chamber were too hard for the comfort of the Councillors, they should be padded; and even this outlay may have been due to a desire to find work for those who needed it. On the other hand, the indications of distress are numerous and startling.

One such indication is furnished by the report of a debate

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of the Venerable Company of Pastors. It was proposed that a deputation should wait upon the magistrates "to inform them how scantily they provide for their clergy in times when everything is dear, the fact being that even ministers with no families but only wives to support are absolutely unable to live upon their salaries." But the proposal was rejected on the ground that the magistrates were already aware of the distress of the clergy, and could do little to help them, and that it would never do for it to be said that the clergy had applied for increased emoluments at a time of general destitution. "It is better," the resolution continued, "to endure our sufferings, leaving it to God to relieve them when it seems good to Him; but if any of our brethren are too hard pressed they may declare their condition to the magistrates, and ask assistance from them privately."

Still more sorrowful was the case of the immigrant pastors from France, who had no wages. The magistrates distributed a certain amount of money among them, and advised them that, as no more was likely to be forthcoming, they would be wise to lay out a part of it in learning a business or a trade. Their reply is worth preserving:—

"For several weeks," they said, "their position had been very painful; they felt their indebtedness to the Genevans the more acutely because no one reminded them of it; and they had decided to do with as little as possible to eat until the Spring, when they hoped to have better news from their own country."

This measure of abstinence would not, perhaps, have sufficed, by itself, to tide the immigrants over the time of

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scarcity. Fortunately they received donations from other Swiss cities—500 florins from Payerne, 600 crowns from Berne, 400 crowns from Zurich, 100 crowns from Coire; and further help was forthcoming from certain of their compatriots and co-religionists who followed them into exile. These were the comparatively faint-hearted protestantists who, on the night of the massacre, had renounced their faith to save their lives. Afterwards, they had realised their property with what haste they could, and left the country. Geneva received them somewhat coldly, and they had to apologise for their apostasy before they were allowed to receive the Holy Communion. But they loosened their purse-strings, and that was the thing most needful at the moment.

The situation righted itself by degrees. Some of the refugees found an occupation in Geneva; others took to farming in the Canton de Vaud; the majority—thanks mainly to the skilful diplomacy of M. de Bèze—were enabled to return to France.

In the meanwhile, however, Geneva had been in imminent peril of destruction. The news came that the Duke of Savoy had assembled an army of 18,000 men at Chamberg and Annecy; and only 1,400 Genevans capable of bearing arms could be mustered to resist him. But the Duke of Savoy changed his mind, and did not march. Charles IX of France also threatened to come and storm the City, and Geneva prepared to withstand him, single-handed, rejecting the offer of a garrison from Fribourg and Soleure, because these states stipulated that their soldiers should be allowed to worship in Geneva according to the Roman Catholic rites. But Charles IX also changed his mind and did not



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march. He fell ill, and in 1574 he died and Henri III succeeded him.

These incidents, however, were the prelude of that series of religious wars which was to vex Geneva for many years to come, and, after alternate battles and truces, to culminate in the ever-memorable episode of the Escalade. They are matters which demand a chapter to themselves.

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## CHAPTER X

### TROUBLES WITH FRANCE AND SAVOY—WAR AND PEACE—THE ESCALADE—THE DEATH OF M. DE BÈZE

THE history of the next thirty years or so needs to be compressed. It is a period of alarms and excursions, but, until we come to the Escalade, there is no really conspicuous event. The note of the epoch is a steadily increasing friendliness with France and an unvarying hostility against Savoy. It is true that the Genevans, when they had heard that Henri IV had received the sacrament according to the Roman Catholic rites, held back a bible which they had intended to present to him—that bible, gorgeously bound, still remains in the possession of the City. But when the King assured them that, though Paris was well worth a mass, his regard for Geneva was undiminished by his apostasy, they gladly accepted his assurances.

Savoy, on the other hand, was always regarded as the enemy, and generally behaved as such. In 1578, the Genevans managed to get themselves included in the Treaty between France and the Swiss league; but they had to bribe the Swiss diplomatists in order to achieve their end. It is recorded that they sent to the magistrates of Soleure "a horse-load of fat capons and oranges." In 1582, however, we find them at war with Savoy; and the war was only ended

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by the threatened intervention of Henri IV. A little later we read of attempts, on the part of the Duke of Savoy, to rush the town in time of peace; once by means of soldiers who were to enter the town concealed in barges laden with wood, and once by soldiers who were to find their way in disguised as muleteers. These incidents roused the temper of the Genevans, and they began to think that open war would be preferable to peace of this sort. The Council met and resolved to "ask the advice of God and M. de Bèze" upon the subject; and it would appear that the Councillors were satisfied that the consensus of opinion was in favour of hostilities. War, at all events, was declared in 1589. At first the Genevans had the support of France and Berne; afterwards they were left to carry on the struggle by themselves.

It would be tedious to trace all the vicissitudes of the campaign. Seeing that Savoy mustered 18,000 men and Geneva only 2,186, the result ought not to have been doubtful. But fortune favoured the brave. The Duke of Savoy, aided by a considerable detachment of Spanish troops, could certainly have destroyed Geneva if he had given his undivided energies to that purpose. He was tempted, however, as the champion of the Catholic Leagues to march against Henri IV, and Geneva was saved by the diversion. The troops which he left to campaign against the City were not more than the citizens were capable of dealing with. Sympathisers from many countries—from England among other countries—sent them money and they held their own.

The atrocities committed by the Savoyard soldiers were numerous and terrible. We read of one prisoner of war

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being skinned alive; of another who, with his feet amputated, was driven about on a donkey with his face to the tail, and then flung on a dung-hill to die. We also read of peasants being hung up to be roasted alive over the fireplaces in their own cottages. It is not wonderful that the Genevan soldiers should have held that this sort of thing gave them the right to retaliate, at least by pillaging, when they gained the upper hand. The wonderful thing is that, when they did pillage, M. de Bèze called them to order and was listened to. He told them that they were degrading Geneva to the level of a brigand's cave, and bade them make instant restitution of the plunder which they had taken from the peasantry. It is recorded that they obeyed him, and there could be no better proof that M. de Bèze was a strong man.

Hostilities came to an end in 1598 as the result of the treaty of Vervins, between Charles Emmanuel of Savoy and Henri IV of France. Geneva was not formally included in the treaty; but Henri IV gave out that Geneva must profit by it or he must be reckoned with, and Charles Emmanuel ostensibly accepted the situation thus created. It was time, for the Genevans had suffered terribly. To find funds for the war they had been reduced to the desperate course of summoning all the wealthiest citizens to the Hôtel de Ville and demanding immediate contributions. Altogether it had cost them 1,500 livres and 100,000 crowns in money. But their troubles were not yet over. The famous enterprise of the Escalade was still to come.

The plot of that treacherous attack was hatched at Thonon on the occasion of a festive gathering to celebrate

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the success of St. Francis de Sales[1] in restoring Roman Catholicism in Chablais, and was apparently countenanced and supported by one or two Genevan traitors in high places. At all events a Syndic was called upon, four several times, to stand his trial for complicity in it; and the result of each trial was worse for him than that of those which had preceded it. At the first trial, indeed, he was acquitted; but at the three other trials he was sentenced respectively to be fined, to be imprisoned, and, finally, to be broken on the wheel. This, however, is to anticipate; the events must be narrated in order.

The time was December 1602. Duke Charles Emmanuel had secretly crossed the mountains, established his headquarters at Etrembières; a sufficient army had been quietly mobilised; there were 800 Savoyards, 1,000 Spaniards, 400 Neapolitans, and 4,000 Piedmontese at Bonne, La Roche, Bonneville, and other places near Geneva. The Duke had also been at pains to allay suspicion by assuring the Genevans, through his agents, that he desired nothing more than to be on friendly terms with them. But, at midnight of December the 12th, he set his forces in motion.

A storming party of some two hundred men or so led the way, under the command of M. Bernolière, who had

[1] Saint Francis de Sales (1567—1622) called himself Bishop of Geneva—though Geneva, of course, did not recognise him. His eloquence was a powerful help to the Counter-Reformation, and he was a charming writer. M. de Bèze met him and liked him. He founded an Academy in his diocese which in many respects anticipated the French Academy founded by Richelieu.

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extreme unction administered to him ostentatiously before he started. The main body of 4,000 men was to follow under Lieutenant-General d'Albigni. Acting on information received, the storming party struck the Corraterie rampart at a point where there was no sentinel on the look-out for them. They carried with them faggots and hurdles to help them over the moat, ladders that could be dovetailed together to scale the rampart with, and axes and crowbars for breaking down or forcing gates. A Scotch Jesuit, named Alexander, gave them his benediction as they climbed, and handed to every man an amulet which purported to guarantee him in the first instance against being killed, and in the second instance against being damned eternally if he were killed.

Fortune at first smiled upon their efforts. They succeeded in maintaining the rampart unobserved, and kept quiet, waiting for d'Albigni and the dawn. A single sentinel whom they met was slain in silence. But presently a small company of the watch passed by upon its rounds. Upon these too the soldiers flung themselves, and most of them were quickly pitched over into the moat. One gun went off, however, and one man managed to escape. He was the drummer, and he ran along the rampart, drumming as he went, as far as the Porte de la Monnaie. It was enough. The alarm was given. The invaders saw that they must fight in the dark, instead of waiting for the dawn. *Vive Espagne!* they shouted. *Ville gagnée! Tue Tue!* and dashed down into the streets, expecting d'Albigni and his 4,000 men to follow them.

But this was what d'Albigni and his 4,000 men could

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not do. Chance—or the hand of Providence—had interfered to save Geneva. A message to say that the City was as good as captured had already been sent off to the Duke of Savoy at Etrembières; and the Duke was despatching couriers to announce his victory at all the courts of Europe. But it happened that the Genevans at the Porte Neuve loaded a cannon to the muzzle with chains, and any other old iron that came to hand, and fired it in a direction parallel with the rampart. Had the aim been bad, Geneva would have fallen that night beyond a doubt. But the aim was good, and the shot broke the ladders into pieces, so that no one could climb by them any more; and there was Lieutenant-General d'Albigni with his army helpless in the moat, while the storming party was caught in a trap within the walls. The citizens snatched up their weapons, and hurried down, half dressed, to give them battle in the dark. Their pastor, Simon Goulart,[1] who wrote a jubilant description of the episode, declared that he himself would have been delighted to join in the affray if only he had had a coat of mail. A brave woman, who was making soup for an early breakfast, flung the scalding fluid, saucepan and all, out of window on the heads of the intruders. Other missiles were showered upon them from other windows; while the number of armed men who faced them in the open

[1] Simon Goulart (1543—1628) was a Frenchman who accepted the Reformation in 1565, and came to Geneva in 1566. In 1572 he was made pastor of the Church of Saint Gervais. After the death M. de Bèze, he became President of the Venerable Company. He wrote more than fifty books on various subjects.

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steadily increased. In the end, after inflicting upon the Genevans a loss of seventeen killed and twenty wounded, they were swept back into the moat, leaving many dead, and thirteen prisoners behind them.

"*Misérable butor, vous avez fait une belle cacade*"—"Blockhead, you have made a pretty mess of it!" was Charles Emmanuel's greeting to d'Albigni, when he heard the truth; and with that he mounted his horse and rode away to Turin, without even troubling to hear the fate of his prisoners. These, it should be added, were all beheaded in the course of the next day; while the heads of those who had been killed were collected and spiked as an ornament to the ramparts and a terror to evil-doers.

M. de Bèze, who was now an old man and very deaf, had slept through the fighting undisturbed, and knew nothing of it until his friends told him the story the next morning. Though he had now retired from the active duties of the pastorate, he dressed himself and went down to the Cathedral of Saint Pierre, where he mounted the pulpit stairs, and called upon the congregation to sing Psalm CXXIV—the Psalm which begins—

*If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say; if the Lord himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us.*

The Psalm which ends—

*Our soul is escaped even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken and we are delivered.*

*Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord: who hath made heaven and earth.*

It was the old Reformer's last public appearance—and

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a fitting one, giving as it does the last dramatic touch to the most dramatic incident in Genevan annals. He lived until 1605, but he was growing feebler and feebler. He suffered from no actual malady, but it was obvious to all that the light was flickering out. His intellect, however, was clear until the last, and the picture of his last days, drawn by his biographer, Antoine La Faye, recalls Bunyan's picture of the Christian pilgrims waiting in the Land of Beulah for their summons to cross the river to the shining City.

The Venerable Company of Pastors in conclave resolved that no day should be allowed to pass without at least two of their number paying him a visit. For the rest "he found his pleasure in reading grave and pious colloquies and sermons, and particularly in those words of Augustine: "Long have I lived; long have I sinned. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" And, at the last, "Without pain, and without a struggle, all his senses, as it seemed, failing him simultaneously, in one single instant, he gave back his soul to God, his bodily pilgrimage having lasted eighty-six years, three months, and nine days, and forty of his years having been spent in the holy office of the ministry."

"M. de Bèze," La Faye continues, "was a man of sturdy build, conspicuous beauty, and health so vigorous that he often said that he did not know the meaning of a headache. He displayed high talents, accurate judgment, a tenacious memory, and remarkable eloquence, while in courtesy of manner he was second to no one. In view of the great gifts thus recited, and his great age (though these are things less to be regarded than his learning and his piety)

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many used to speak of M. de Bèze as the Phœnix of his time."

It is the eulogium of a friend, but there is nothing to be subtracted from it, and even something to be added to it. M. de Bèze's courage was not the least of his great qualities; he was one of the few reformers who did not fear the plague; and he was not afraid to face a regiment of soldiers and admonish them for pillaging, at a time when it was almost necessary for them to pillage that they might live. Moreover, he was a diplomatist who, with no army at his back, made Geneva respected in the Courts of Europe, and effectively championed the interests of Protestantism in other countries besides his own. His fame is less than Calvin's because it is not, like Calvin's, associated with any definite development of religious thought; because he was not a pioneer either in matters of doctrine or Church government. For this reason, no doubt, it must be admitted that he was not so great as Calvin. But he was infinitely more human, and his memory is infinitely more pleasant to dwell upon. He is, perhaps, the only one of the Genevan Reformers whom one would be glad to know if he were still living in our midst.

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## CHAPTER XI

### EDUCATION AT GENEVA—CALVIN'S UNIVERSITY—THE DISCIPLINE—THE PROFESSORS—ISAAC CASAUBON AND HIS PAYING GUEST

THE death of M. de Bèze—the last notable survivor of the early rigours and severities of reformed Geneva—may be said to close an epoch. The opportunity is a good one to turn back and review the progress of letters and learning; and to trace the history of that University of which M. de Bèze was the first rector, and which, even in times of disturbance and distress, numbered so many eminent scholars among its professors. There were learned men, of course, in Geneva before the Reformation. Bonivard was one; we have his word for it that there were others. One of those others was the patriot, Levrery, whose Latin verses, composed on the eve of his execution, have been quoted. These early scholars, however, went away to study. The Geneva of their time was in no sense a seat of learning; the early history of education in that City was neither great not glorious; and the principal emotion derived from the reading of it is a pleasant sense of the superiority of modern methods.

The earliest discoverable reference to educational affairs belongs to the 12th century, and is found in a brief note on certain proceedings of the Council preserved by the historian Spon. Someone had enquired whether there was any

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teacher in Geneva who gave lessons gratuitously. The Councillors replied that they knew of no such person, but that they believed that there was some one in the Town who gave lessons for money. Their ignorance is naïve, and throws quite a flood of light upon the condition of culture at the period. Somewhat later, in 1213, we learn that Pierre de Sessons, Bishop of Geneva, "set up a doctor to teach the young ecclesiastics." Then, in the fourteenth century, we find Emperor Charles IV offering to make Geneva a University City; and at the beginning of the fifteenth century we find the same proposals emanating from another Genevan Bishop, Cardinal Jean de Brogny. In each case the citizens rejected the proposal. The reason given was that they feared that the students would behave uproariously, though it is probable that their real apprehension was that the Duke of Savoy would find a means of "working" the University to his advantage.

In 1429 we touch firmer ground. That is the date of the first Genevan public school, known as the Ecole de Versonnex.

A resolution to establish a public school had been carried by the Council in the previous year, but the requisite funds were not easily forthcoming. So François Versonnex, a rich citizen, stepped forward and offered to bear the cost. The deed of donation, dated Jan. 30, 1429, is preserved. An extract from it will help to illustrate the poverty of the Geneva of that date in educational resources.

After declaring his desire to devote a portion of his wealth to pious purposes, the benefactor proceeds to say:—

"That in his opinion scholastic discipline is advantageous,

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seeing that it drives out ignorance, disposes men to wisdom, forms their manners, endows them with virtue, and by these means facilitates and favours the good administration of public affairs. Considering, therefore, that this illustrious City of Geneva has, up to the present, suffered greatly from the want of such discipline—more especially because there has been no place or house appropriated to the purpose, with the result that school-masters have been obliged to hire houses at their own expense, and these have generally been badly designed and inconveniently situated for the accommodation of the scholars, too much in the way of laymen, and too far from the inn in which the scholars take their meals—he proposes," etc., etc.

So the new school-house was built in a garden hitherto given over to cross-bow practice. It was 94 feet long and 34 feet wide. The instruction was gratuitous, the head-master getting a capitation fee from the public purse. A residence was provided for him and his assistants, and they were directed, when they quarrelled, to refer their differences to the Syndics, that they might be settled without disturbing the community at large. It was also enacted—though the enactment seems only to have been enforced by fits and starts—that no teaching should be done elsewhere than in this school. On one occasion we read of private school-masters being put in the stocks for thus infringing the public schoolmaster's privileges. On another occasion we find them ordered to attend the public school as pupils, subject to the discipline, and pay for instruction which they received there.

Of the quality of the teaching we know nothing; but

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one interesting regulation has been preserved. It was of the essence of the contract set forth in the Deed of Gift that every pupil should, every morning, kneel at the altar and say an *Ave Maria* and a *Pater Noster* for the founder's soul. It was also of the essence of the contract that any pupil who neglected to do so should be birched. For the rest, we only know that the school fell upon evil times during an epidemic of the plague. The headmaster ran away from the contagion, and the Council closed the building, in 1531, on the ground that the children were knocking it to pieces.

Next, in 1535, after the Protestants had gained the upper hand, came the Ecole de la Rive, established in the Convent of the Cordeliers.[1] The first headmaster was the Dauphiné reformer, Antoine Saulnier. He had a salary of 100 golden crowns a year; and his *Ordre de l'Ecole* is worth quoting as an example of a mediæval school-prospectus.

"In our school," he writes, "the lectures begin at five o'clock in the morning and continue until ten, which is our usual dinner hour. The ordinary curriculum consists of instruction in the three most excellent languages, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, not to mention the French language, which in the opinion of the learned, is by no means to be despised. We hope that, the Lord helping us, the time will come when we shall also teach rhetoric and dialectic."

Saulnier's head-mastership came to an end at the time

[1] On the site on which the Grenier à blé de Rive was built in 1719. The school gives its name to the modern Rue du Vieux Collège.

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when the Libertins gained the mastery and sent Calvin into exile. First an attempt was made to cut down his salary on the ground that he only taught but did not preach, but the proposal was withdrawn on his undertaking to preach in his leisure hours. Shortly afterwards he was banished because he refused to administer the Holy Communion according to the rites of Berne. He withdrew to Lausanne, where he assisted in the foundation of the Academy. Mathurin Cordier, his assistant, retired simultaneously to Neuchâtel. Calvin, on his return from exile caused the appointment of Principal to be given to Châtillon;[1] but it soon became necessary to banish Châtillon on account of his advanced views on the subject of predestination. After this the school was once more, for some time, in a bad way; but it recovered its prosperity under Louis Enoch of Inoudun, in Berri, who presided over it from 1550 to 1557.

So much for the schools. The University, for the foundation of which Calvin has to be thanked, only dates from 1558. The building was begun in that year, was sufficiently advanced for the teaching to be commenced in 1559, but was not completed until 1562. Its scope was originally

[1] Sebastian Châtillon (or Castalion), born in 1515, had made Calvin's acquaintance at Strasburg. After his quarrel with Calvin he withdrew to Basle, where he lived in poverty until 1552, when he was appointed to the chair of Greek. He was sufficiently in advance of his age to oppose the putting to death of heretics, a subject on which he had a warm controversy with M. de Bèze, who held that the civil magistrates should punish heretics with the utmost rigour of the law. See his treatise *De hereticis a civili magistratu gladio puniendis.*

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limited. Ultimately, it became an educational centre of first-rate importance; but, to begin with, as Mark Pattison clearly proved in his "Life of Isaac Casaubon," it was little more than a grammar school culminating in a theological College. Nothing certainly could be more modest than the advertisement of its purpose in the Preamble to the Statutes:—

"Verily hath God heretofore endowed our Commonwealth with many and notable adornments, yet hath it to this day to seek abroad for instruction in good arts and discipline for its youth, with many lets and hindrances."

There clearly is nothing here to suggest that Calvin contemplated the establishment of a seat of learning which should dazzle the imagination of the Protestant scholars of other parts of Europe. The stormy times were adverse to any such ambitious scheme, and the resources of the town would have been inadequate for its accomplishment. Even as things were, the necessary funds were only raised with difficulty, and by dint of ingenious fiscal devices which can by no means be held up as a model for the imitation of fiscal reformers.

One device was to ear-mark for the University chest all the fines imposed upon law-breakers. Those who gave short measure in the market and those who spoke evil of the magistrates were alike mulcted in the interests of learning; the heaviest contribution was that exacted from a bookseller convicted of having charged an excessive price for a copy of the Psalms of David. A second method consisted in summoning all the notaries of the town before the Council, and instructing them, when any citizen called them in to make his will, to impress upon the testator



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the desirability of bequeathing something to the University; the result was a total gain of 1074 florins, including 312 florins from Robert Estienne the printer, and five sous from a poor woman in the baking business. A third contrivance was to suppress a public banquet, and require the cost, estimated at 100 florins, to be handed to the University authorities.

In this way the University—such as it was—was started, with class rooms for the scholars, and apartments for the professors, who were allowed to supplement their incomes by taking boarders. Everything was poorly done, however, and nobody appears to have been comfortable. Complaints of one sort and another are recorded, in large numbers, in the Register of the Council. For one thing, there was no heating apparatus, but "the teachers used to keep up charcoal fires at their own expense, and require every pupil to pay something towards them." For another thing, there was no glass in the windows, and we read that "As to the request of the Principal that glass windows shall be placed in the class rooms, it is decided that this shall not be done, but that the scholars may, if they like, fill up the apertures with paper." The teachers, too, were constantly expressing dissatisfaction with the accommodation provided for them. As early as 1559 we have one of them applying for a more commodious lodging on the ground that "God has called him to the estate of matrimony." A little later we come upon this note:—

"Claude Bridet requested permission to lodge above the Tower, where M. Chevalier, lecturer in Hebrew, used to live, for the sake of his health and because the lower ground is

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damp. Decided that he must be satisfied with his present apartment, and that the place to which he refers shall be kept for some one else."

In spite of discomfort, however, hard work was the order of the day. A letter has been preserved from M. de Bèze, the Rector of the University, to the parent of a pupil, in which he says: "I fear I shall be able to make nothing of your son, for, in spite of my entreaties he refuses to work more than fourteen hours a day." The ordinary curriculum did not call for quite such persistent application as that, but was, none the less, sufficiently severe.

The day began, at 7 a.m., with prayers, roll-call, and lessons. At 8-30, there was half an hour's rest, during which the pupils were instructed to "eat bread, praying while they did so, without making a noise." From 9 to 10 there were more lessons, terminating with more prayers; from 10 to 11 the scholars dined; from 11 to 12 they sang psalms; from 12 to 1 there were further lessons inaugurated by prayer; from 1 to 2 there was a quiet time devoted to eating, writing, and informal study; from 2 to 4 there was a final instalment of lessons; and at 4 there was punishment parade in the great college hall.

The punishments were mainly corporal, and were inflicted so frequently that the milder professors protested. "The daily fustigations," said Mathurin Cordier, "disgust the children with study of the humane letters; moreover, their skins get hardened like the donkeys' and they no longer feel the stripes." It should be added, however, that the stripes were not so often inflicted for neglect of the humane letters as for misbehaviour in church. The children had to

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attend three services every Sunday, and one every Wednesday, in addition to the frequent daily prayers at school. They talked and played, as children will, to the scandal of their elders, and they played truant whenever they saw a chance. It must be admitted to be an indication of imperfect discipline that these peccadilloes were often solemnly reviewed before the Town Council instead of being summarily dealt with at a Court of First Instance in the head-master's study. The Councillors, however, showed no sentimental tendency to spare the rod. They might fine offenders whom their police caught in the streets when they ought to have been availing themselves of the means of grace; but they also very generally turned them over to the scholastic authorities to be whipped. A typical case is that of two lads who were caught playing quoits on the ramparts during the hours of divine service on a Sunday morning.

"Resolved," runs the entry, "to hand them over to M. de Bèze, that he may cause them to be given such a fustigation as will prevent them from doing it again."

At the beginning, the University had only three faculties, and only three Professors—Antoine Chevalier, professor of Hebrew, François Beyraud, professor of Greek, and Jean Tagot, professor of Philosophy. Theology—mainly, it would appear, pastoral Theology—was taught by Calvin, and afterwards by M. de Bèze, in the character of pastor. A faculty of law was added later, when the massacre of Saint Bartholomew brought the eminent lawyers—Doneau and Hotman—to the City. "Seeing," say the minutes of the Council, "that God has sent hither these two persons who are very famous and learned in the law, the ministers have asked

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them, if the Council approves, to give a few gratuitous lessons in law—a thing which they are quite willing to do."

The Council duly endorsed the suggestion; but, less than a year later, we find the ministers abashed at their own temerity in making it. On March 2, 1573, they waited on the Council again, and represented that "though there was every appearance that the establishment of a Chair of Law would result to the advantage of the town, yet, at the same time, the course was not devoid of difficulty. There was the fear, for example, that the study of law would deprive other branches of learning of their lustre, as generally happened in Universities; and there was also the fact to be considered that this study was principally pursued by persons of depraved character, mainly of noble birth, who would be reluctant to submit themselves to the discipline of the Church."

These objections, however, weighty though they were, did not prevail. A new Professor, in fact—M. de Bonnefoy—was immediately appointed, and other professors succeeded him. The most famous of them was Jacques Lect,[1] who had to be called upon to resign because the town could not afford to pay his salary. He did so, and continued to serve the State as an ambassador—in which capacity he visited England and the Low Countries, collecting voluntary

[1] Jacques Lect (1560—1611) was four times Syndic, and one year lieutenant of police. His severity prevented his re-election to that office. In addition to his other achievements he wrote many books in the Latin language, both in prose and verse. There are two dozen entries to his credit in the British Museum Catalogue.

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contributions to the Genevan Treasury. It is significant that the subscriptions from this latter source were made conditional upon his restitution to his professorship—a fact which shows that, even at this early period of its history, the University of Geneva had attracted the favourable attention of the rest of Protestant Europe.

For the moment, however, the University was more successful in attracting scholars than in forming them; and its teachers were far more distinguished than its pupils. In the list of the former, in addition to the names already mentioned, we find those of Bertram,[1] Louis Budé,[2] Henry Scrymgeour,[3] Portus,[4] Perrot,[5] Antoine La Faye,[6] Andrew Melvill,[7] Scaliger, and Casaubon. In the lives of some of them we find valuable detail helping to fill in the picture of the Geneva of their period. Scotsmen, for example, will be delighted with the picture of Andrew Melvill walking into the town with infinite assurance, but with little more than

[1] A great Oriental Scholar, Professor of Hebrew. He collaborated in the translation of the Bible published at Geneva in 1588.

[2] Professor of Hebrew and translator of the Psalms.

[3] Of Dundee. He was Professor of Philosophy, and a member of the Council.

[4] The eminent Greek scholar. He had previously been Professor of Greek at Modena and Ferrara.

[5] Rector of the Academy and one of the earliest advocates of religious toleration. He wrote a book *De extremis in ecclesia vitandis.*

[6] Rector of the Academy, and biographer of M. de Bèze.

[7] Subsequently the reformer of the Scottish Universities, and Professor of Theology at Sedan.

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the proverbial half-crown in his pocket, and immediately obtaining an appointment to one of the most important of the professorial chairs. He had been teaching in a College at Poictiers, and the town had been besieged by the Huguenots. Then

"The siege of the town being raised, he left Poictiers, and accompanied by a Frenchman, he took journey to Geneva, leaving books and all there, and carried nothing with him but a little Hebrew Bible in his belt. So he came to Geneva, all upon foot, and as he had done before from Dieppe to Paris, and from that to Poictiers; for he was small and light of body, but full of spirits, vigorous and courageous. His companions of the way, when they came to the inn, would lie down like tired dogs, but he would out and sight the towns and villages, whithersoever they came. The ports of Geneva were carefully kept, because of the troubles of France, and the multitude of strangers that came. Being therefore enquired what they were, the Frenchman, his companion, answered:—

"'We are poor scholars.'

"But Mr. Andrew, perceiving that they had no wish for poor folks, being already overlaid therewith, said,

"'No, no, we are not poor! We have as much as will pay for all we take as long as we tarry. We have letters from his acquaintance to Monsieur de Bèze; let us deliver those, we crave no further.'

"And so, being convoyed to Beza and then to their lodging, Beza perceiving him a scholar, and they having need of a Professor of Humanity in the College, put him within two or three days to trial in Virgil and Homer;

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wherein he could acquit himself so well that without further ado, he is placed in that room of profession; and at his first entry a quarter's fee is paid him in hand. So that, howbeit there was but a crown to the fore betwixt them both, and the Frenchman weak-spirited and wist not what to do, yet he found God's providence to relieve both himself and help his companion till he was provided."

There follows a picture of Melvill's life in the City:—

"In Geneva he abode five years; during the which time his chief study was Divinity, whereon he heard Beza's daily lessons and preachings; Cornelius Bonaventura, Professor of the Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac languages; Portus, a Greek born, Professor of the Greek tongue, with whom he would reason about the right pronunciation thereof; for the Greek pronounced it after the common form, keeping the accents; the which Mr. Andrew controlled by precepts and reason, till the Greek would grow angry and cry out:—

"'*Vos Scoti, vos barbari! docebitis nos Græcos pronunciationem linguæ nostræ, scilicet?*'

"He heard there also Francis Hotman, the renownedst lawyer in his time. There he was well acquainted with my uncle, Mr. Henry Scrymgeour, who, by his learning in the laws and policy and service of many noble princes, had attained to great riches, acquired a pretty plot of ground within a league of Geneva, and built thereon a trim house called 'the Vilet,' and a fair lodging within the town, all which, with a daughter, his only born, he left to the Syndics of the town."

Professor Andrew Melvill is a splendid example of the Scotsman of many shifts who knows how to take care of

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himself wherever he may be. He left Geneva in 1574, and we need not follow his fortunes further. Our attention is claimed by the fortunes of Professor Isaac Casaubon.

Casaubon, who was born in 1559, was Professor of Greek at Geneva, save for a short interval when the chair had to be suppressed for want of funds, from 1578 to 1596. During the interval, when the City was poor and the plague was raging, M. de Bèze did his work for him—as, for a period, he did that of all the Professors; but, as soon as funds permitted, Casaubon was restored to his post. His salary, to begin with, was only £ 10 a year with rooms in College; but, like a brave man, he married on it. His first wife, Maria Prolyot, died in 1585; but he married again in 1586, his second wife being Florence Estienne, the daughter of Henri Estienne,[1] the printer. She bore

[1] The Estienne family was a family famous for its printing presses through several generations. We may note the names of:—

(a) Henri Estienne (1460-1520) who pursued the printing industry at Paris, where he printed many books for Lefêvre d'Etaples.

(b) François Estienne, eldest son of Henri (1502-1550), who also printed books in Paris. He died without issue.

(c) Charles Estienne (1504-1565), third son of Henri Estienne, also published at Paris. Among other things he published some of the earliest known guide books:—*Guide des Chemins et Fleuves de France*, and *Voyages de plusieurs endroits de France* etc. His business was not successful and he died in a debtor's prison.

(d) Robert Estienne I (1503-1559), second son of Henri I, printed Bibles to the dismay of the doctors of the Sorbonne, as well as many important classical works. He accepted Protestantism, and retreated to Geneva, where he died.

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him children abundantly—eighteen in all—amid the sympathetic approval of the citizens, who voted him a sum of money, and an oblation of corn and wine, on the ground that "there is an addition to his family every year."

With all his domestic anxieties, Casaubon was the first Genevan who loved scholarship for its own sake, without regard for the facilities which it gave for the elucidation of the Holy Scriptures. It has been suggested that he married the printer's daughter principally in the hope of thereby obtaining the run of the printer's library; but, if that was his motive, he mistook his man. "As for Estienne," we find him writing, "he guards his books as the Indian griffins do their gold. He lets them go to rack and ruin, but what he has, or what he has not got, I am entirely ignorant." He got books somehow, however, though it was a matter of complaint with him that the Genevan booksellers did not stock the books printed at Frankfort; and in the midst of the turmoils narrated in the last chapter he went on diligently with his studies. "I have divided my time," he writes, towards the close of the war with Savoy, "between the rescension of the text of Aristotle and looking on at the wonders the Lord hath wrought for us." And, when he was not editing Aristotle, he was editing

(e) Henri Estienne II (1528-1598), son of Robert Estienne I, set up a printing-press, distinct from that of his father, at Geneva, in 1557. He did not like the ecclesiastical discipline of Geneva, and died at Lyon. Casaubon became his son-in-law.

(f) Paul Estienne (1566-1627), son of Henri Estienne II.

(g) Antoine Estienne (1592-1624), son of Paul, reverted to Roman Catholicism and returned to live at Paris.

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Diogenes Laertius, or some other difficult classical author. He also took an Englishman into his house in the capacity of "paying guest"; but his experiences in this connection were not entirely satisfactory.

The Englishman in question was Sir Henry Wotton, who came with an introduction from Mr. Richard Thomson of Clare College, Cambridge—a scholar described by Prynne as "a deboshed English Dutchman who seldom went one night to bed sober." Sir Henry's own account of the visit is given in a letter addressed to Lord Zouch. "I took," he says, "my course through the Grisons to Geneva, leaving a discreet country in my opinion too soon." "The town," he adds, "seems to me marvellous unpleasant." And he proceeds:—

"Here I am placed, to my very great contentment, in the house of Mr. Isaac Casaubon, a person of sober conditions among the French.... Concerning views, your Honour knows we are here rather scholars than politicians, and sooner good than wise. Yet this much I must say that the state of the town is undone with war, even in manners, for certainly I have not seen more temptations in Italy."

This generalisation is supported by particulars which it is not necessary to produce, but which illustrate the difficulty of making people moral by Act of Parliament. What one is obliged, however reluctantly, to add is that the "paying guest" treated his host very shabbily. He not only left without paying him, but got Casaubon to put his name to bills, and even pledged Casaubon's credit for the horse on which he rode away. Ultimately the money was refunded, but not before Casaubon had written to Scaliger, and

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other scholars, complaining how outrageously he had been treated.

It was not long after this episode, however, that Casaubon left Geneva. Great efforts were made to keep him. The Council even offered to double his salary—though it was stipulated that this should be done secretly lest the other professors should be jealous. But Casaubon would not stay. Possibly he felt himself becoming too great a man for so small a city—*trop grand poisson pour notre petit lac*, as Madame de Stael expresses it; possibly he wanted to get out of the way of his father-in-law, who was just then living up to his reputation as the Pantagruel of Geneva in a manner calculated to displease, if not to compromise, the members of his family. At all events Geneva knew him no more, except as a visitor, after 1596—in which year he accepted a Professorship at the University of Montpellier.

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## CHAPTER XII

### THE PROGRESS OF GENEVA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—DISTINGUISHED TOURISTS—JOHN MILTON—JOHN EVELYN—BISHOP BURNET—JOSEPH ADDISON

FROM the Escalade, in 1603, to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, we traverse a barren period of Geneva annals. At the very beginning of it we have to chronicle the deaths, one after the other, of the great men who had made the previous epoch famous: Theodore de Bèze, Simon Goulart, Antoine La Faye, Jacques Lect, Michel, Roset. [1] Alike in the pastorate, and in public life, men of less mark succeeded them. The names of Trembley, Tronchin, Turretini, Calendrini, revive few memories and fail to dazzle the imagination. [2] In so far as any man stood out conspicuously above his fellows, and held the attention of Europe, Jean Diodati did so. There was a time when, for the rest of Protestantism, Diodati stood for Geneva, much as Calvin had stood for Geneva a little less than a century

[1] Michel Roset was fourteen times syndic, and seven times lieutenant of police. He carried through 84 diplomatic negotiations, including the conclusion of treaties with Berne, Zurich, and Soleure. He wrote a history of Geneva which is still in MS. in the Geneva library.

[2] The Turretinis, however, are important. The family came from Lucca, and has given Geneva many generations of theologians. François Turretini, in particular, did much in the way of pressing more liberal theological views on the Genevan Church.

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before. To John Milton and John Evelyn, as we shall see presently, he appeared less as a man than as a representative institution. But he was not a man on Calvin's level, or even on the level of M. de Bèze. The only notable thing he ever did was to pulverise the Arminians in argument at Dordrecht; and that is hardly an achievement giving a fair claim to immortality, though it may have justified his contemporaries in presenting him with a gold medal and a purse of 750 livres.

The period, moreover, is no less poor in great events than in great men, and from beginning to end strikes no note of distinction in literature or any other of the arts. There is theology in abundance, and there is a flood of prose and verse, celebrating the failure of the Escalade, and there is more prose and verse describing the great fire of Geneva, which burnt down the wooden bridge over the Rhone, in 1670; but there is nothing that it is worth while to make a point of remembering.

On its political side, the period is one of suspicion of the House of Savoy, and the maintenance, not always without difficulty, of friendly relations with France. The Dukes of Savoy, on their part, hatched plots, which happily were exposed in time, to gain possession of the town. The Kings of France, on their side, gradually lost their sympathy with Genevan Protestantism, though it was part of their policy to avoid any open breach of friendship. England, however, was always well disposed to the Republic, alike under James I, Charles I, and the Lord Protector; and the net result was that, in spite of occasional alarms, Geneva enjoyed such a period of rest as was essential to its prosperous growth. In 1615 there was a fresh epidemic of the plague which

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swept away a quarter of the population, and in 1670 there was the great fire to which reference has been made, but in the main the times were tranquil and untroubled. The scions of distinguished houses—a future king of Sweden among them—attended the University, attracted by Jean Diodati's reputation; many of them boarded in Diodati's house—the Villa Diodati still standing in the suburbs of the City. Commercial relations were established with the rest of Europe; theological civilities were exchanged with wandering representatives of the Eastern Church; prosperous industries were established and developed.

In other respects, too, one can trace the gradual modernising of Geneva, during this period. We see the ecclesiastical discipline losing its grip upon the City, or at least restricted to a narrower field of usefulness. We hear of a good many new sumptuary laws, but we also gather that many of them were only a means of accentuating class distinctions, and that there was a growing difficulty in enforcing them. We find persons burnt alive for witchcraft at the beginning of the period, but not towards the end of it. We hear of doubts diffusing themselves as to the efficacy of torture in extracting the truth from witnesses; and we find even heresy dealt with less rigorously than of old. A heretic who was sentenced to be "strangled in the usual manner," had the sentence, without difficulty, commuted into one of ten years' banishment. Finally we note that it was during this period that distinguished travellers began to visit Geneva in the ordinary course of the grand tour. Some of our own most illustrious men of letters were included in their mumber. It is interesting, where it is possible, to see how the town impressed them.

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Sir Henry Wotton's visit has already been referred to. Other early visitors of whose experiences we know less were Sir Dudley Carleton and Sir Isaac Wake, both of whom corresponded with Diodati. In 1639 Milton passed through the City, coming to it over the Great Saint Bernard, on his way home from Italy. He has not recorded his impressions, however, merely mentioning that he was "daily in the Society of John Diodati, the most learned Professor of Theology," though he wrote his name in an album in which an Italian resident, Camillo Cerdugni (or Camille Cardouin) collected the autographs of distinguished English travellers. Among the other names in the album, which was sold some time ago in a London auction room and is now in America, are those of Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, Henry Clifford Earl of Cumberland, Lord Cranburn, Andrew Kniveton, Daniel Boughton, and George Thomason, who is apparently the same George Thomason who subsequently presented his collection of Civil War Tracts to the British Museum. Milton's own entry runs thus:—

If Vertue feeble were
Heaven itselfe would stoope to her.
Cælum non animum muto dum trans mare curro.
Junii 10, 1639 *Joannes Miltonius,* Anglus.

Next comes John Evelyn, of the diary, who had wit enough to be away on his travels at the time when the fight between King and Parliament was at its hottest. He reached Geneva in the summer of 1646, and his record of his sojourn there is fairly full.

His route was from Domo d'Ossola over the Simplon—

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"Mons Sempronius, now Mount Sampion"—to Brigue. He evidently got no pleasure from the scenery, for he speaks of "strange, horrid and fearful craggs and tracts"; and he had trouble with the rude inhabitants of the pass. They declared that his companion, Captain Wray's dog, had killed a goat, and demanded compensation. The travellers yielded, fearing that if they refused they would be beheaded—"for that amongst these rude people a very small misdemeanor does often meet that sentence"—rode down to Brigue, and took fresh mules to Geneva, "passing through as pleasant a country as that we had just traversed was melancholy and troublesome," where they were entertained by "a true old blade," whom they did not leave before they had presented his daughter, "a pretty, well-fashioned young woman," with a ruby ring, and thence, after passing through Saint Maurice, arrived at Beveretta, in Savoy.

Here there was an incident. The inn having but scant accommodation, Mr. John Evelyn, who was tired, insisted that one of his hostess's daughters should be turned out of her bed, in order that he might get into it. Objections were raised; but apparently he did not know the language well enough to understand their nature. At all events he insisted, with true Anglo-Saxon peremptoriness; and refused even to wait to have the sheets changed. One can easily picture the scene—Mr. Evelyn stamping his foot and looking determined, the worthy woman shrugging her shoulders as she obeyed, and deploring the madness of travelling Englishmen in her unintelligible patois. For the fact was that the young woman to whose bed Mr. Evelyn succeeded was suffering from the small-pox, and Mr. Evelyn caught the



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complaint from her, and was laid up with it as soon as he had presented the inevitable letter of introduction to Diodati.

The doctor bled him, and told him that his blood was "so burnt and vicious as it would have proved the plague or spotted fever had he proceeded by any other method"—a statement which does not bear the stamp of verisimilitude. He was "tended by a vigilant Swiss matron, whose monstrous throat, when I sometimes awak'd out of unquiet slumbers, would affright me." He happily recovered, however, to see the sights and criticise the institutions. He heard Mr. Diodati preach, "after the French mode, in a gown with a cape and his hat on"; and he remarks that the Church discipline, though Calvinistic, is "nothing so rigid as either our Scotch or English Sectaries of that denomination," and makes a note that the Cathedral "has four turrets, on one of which stands a continual sentinel—on another cannons are mounted." He describes the cross-bow exercises, approves the College, the Library, and the hospital, admires "a large crocodile hanging in chains," and concludes his appreciation thus:—

"The town is not much celebrated for beautiful women, for even at this distance from the Alps the gentlewomen have something full throats, but our Captain Wray (afterwards Sir William, son of that Sir Christopher, who had both been in arms against his Majesty for the Parliament) fell so mightily in love with one of Mons. Soladive's daughters that with much persuasion he could not be prevailed on to think on his journey into France, the season now coming on extremely hot.

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"My sickness and abode here cost me 45 pistoles of gold to my host, and five to my honest doctor, who for six weeks' attendance and the apothecary thought it so generous a reward, that at my taking leave he presented me with his advice for the regimen of my health, written with his own hand in Latin. This regimen I much observed, and I bless God passed the journey without inconvenience from sickness, but it was an extraordinarily hot unpleasant season and journey by reason of the craggy ways."

Other writers to whose narratives of travel one naturally turns in this connection are Bishop Burnet and Joseph Addison; but in neither case does one draw a prize. Geneva, according to the Bishop "is too well known to be much insisted on"; but he enlarges upon the fiscal system, which consisted mainly of a government monopoly of corn, and is struck with the general diffusion of polite learning: "Everybody almost here has a good tincture of a learned education, in so much that they are masters of the Latin, they know the controversies of Religion and History, and they are generally men of good sense." He also meditated philosophically on the mountains, concluding that "these cannot be primary productions of the Author of Nature, but are the vast ruin of the first World, which at the Deluge broke here into so many inequalities," and he is the first Englishman to draw attention to Mont Blanc, of which eminence he writes:—

"One hill not far from Geneva, called *Maudit* or Cursed, of which one-third is always covered with snow, is 2 miles of perpendicular height, according to the observation of that incomparable Mathematician and Philosopher, Nicolas

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Fatio Duilio, who at 22 years of age is already one of the greatest men of his age, and seems to be born to carry Learning some sizes beyond what it has yet attained."

That was in 1685. Addison came to Geneva in 1703, and stayed some weeks there; but tells us little of interest about his visit. He evidently did not understand mountain scenery, for he writes apologetically, that the mountains "are, *however*, at so great a Distance that they open up a wonderful Variety of beautiful Prospects," and adds that "the most beautiful view of all is the Lake, and the border of it that lie North of the Town."

These are poor, bald accounts, however, quite unworthy of great writers, and entirely failing to draw any sort of picture. For a picture we have to turn back to the stories of Lieutenant-General Ludlow and the other Regicides who formed the second notable English colony on the Lake.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### THE ARRIVAL OF LUDLOW THE REGICIDE—HIS REMOVAL TO VEVEY —MURDER OF LISLE—MEASURES TAKEN FOR LUDLOW'S PROTECTION—THE MANNER OF HIS LIFE—HIS DEATH AND BURIAL

One naturally begins the story of the Regicide colony with the story of the most eminent of the Regicides, Lieutenant-General Edmund Ludlow. He tells it himself in his Memoirs, in such blunt, straightforward, English fashion that it is a delight to follow him across Europe.

He was born in 1617, took his degree at Trinity College, Oxford, and was admitted to the Inner Temple in 1638. At the beginning of the Civil War he was one of the hundred gentlemen who formed the bodyguard of the Earl of Essex. Later he was major of Sir Arthur Hesilrige's regiment of horse in Sir William Waller's army, and was present at the second battle of Newbury. In 1646 he was elected member for Wiltshire, and was one of the chief promoters of Pride's Purge in 1649. In 1649 he was appointed one of the King's judges, and his name stands fortieth in the list of those who signed the death-warrant. Consequently, in spite of his military services in Ireland during the Protectorate, he was marked out for vengeance when the Restoration came. In spite of the Act of Indemnity which covered his case so far as the death penalty was concerned, he surmised that his life was in danger, and took ship from Lewes to Dieppe.

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At Dieppe he was "received with all possible demonstrations of civility," but still did not feel safe, as a reward of £300 was offered to anyone who would kidnap him. He hired a coach, therefore, and drove to Paris; his account of his sight-seeing there is very characteristic:—

"In this town I viewed such things as were accounted remarkable, passing several Days in this Exercise. The *Louvre* seemed to me rather like a Garrison than a Court; being very full of soldiers and dirt. I saw the King's Stable of Horses, which, though not extraordinarily furnished, gave me more pleasure than I should have received by seeing their Master, who thinks fit to treat them better than his miserable People. But I loathed to see such numbers of idle Drones, who in ridiculous Habits, wherein they place a great part of their Religion, are to be seen in every part, eating the Bread of the credulous Multitude, and leaving them to be distinguished from the Inhabitants of other countries by their Cheeks, Canvas Clothing, and Wooden Shoes."

It is a charming thumb-nail sketch. Others follow. At Lyon there was trouble with "Fryars of different Orders"; "one of these behaving himself in so lewd a manner as obliged me to show my Resentment of his Impudence." At Recluse, the frontier town, the traveller feared that the garrison would require him to hand over his arms; "but they only desired Mony to drink, which I willingly gave." The same day the Rhone was crossed and Geneva reached; the arrival being recorded with a characteristically British sentiment. "In the House where I lodged, the Mistress being an English woman, I found good Beer, which was a

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great refreshment to me, after the fatigue of my Journey, and constant use of wines, by which my body had been much distempered with Rheums."

Two others of the Regicides—John Lisle and William Cawley—were already at Geneva; but they agreed with Ludlow in doubting whether, even at Geneva, their security was absolute. Formal enquiries were instituted as to what would happen if a demand were made for their extradition and supported by the influence of the King of France. An undertaking to give them time to escape, through the Water Gate or otherwise, while pretending to look for them, was not considered sufficiently reassuring. The exiles, therefore, addressed a request for protection to the Government of Berne; and this being favourably received, they moved to Lausanne, where they were joined by a further company of regicides—William Say, Nicholas Love, Cornelius Holland, Andrew Broughton—as well as by Colonel Bisco, Sergeant Dendy, and Mr. Slingsby Bethel. Colonel Bisco left almost immediately to trade in Holland; but Ludlow and his more intimate friend settled down, at the suggestion of the Berne magistrates, at Vevey. The account of the arrival at Vevey is another of those graphic descriptions which sparkle in the Memoirs:—

"At Vevey we were received with the greatest Demonstrations of kindness and Affection both from the Magistrates and People: the publick Wine was presented to us in great abundance, and the next morning the Banderet or principal Magistrate, accompanied by most of the members of the Council, came to the place were we lay to give us a visit; expressing themselves ready to serve us to the utmost of

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their Power; giving us thanks for the Honour they said we did the Town in coming to reside among them; and assuring us, that though they were sufficiently informed concerning our Persons and Employments Civil and Military, yet the principal motive that inclined them to offer their services in so hearty a manner was the consideration of our Sufferings for the Liberties of our Country. We returned our thanks as well as we could; and the next Day, having retired to a private House belonging to one Monsieur *Dubois* who was one of the Council of the Town, we were again visited by the Magistrates and presented with Wine, with Assurances that their Excellencies of *Bern* had caused them to understand, that they would take the Civilities they should do to us, as done to themselves. They acquainted us also, that Seats were ordered for us in both their Churches; that the *Commander*, as they name him, was directed to accompany us the first time to the one, and the *Chatelain* to the other. These Favours so considerable, so cordial and so seasonable, I hope a Man in my Condition may mention, without incurring the Charge of Ostentation."

The Swiss guide, philosopher, and friend of the Regicides was the Very Rev. Dean Hummel of Berne. He knew English well, having stayed some time in the country, visited Oxford and Cambridge, and sat under the Rev. Thomas Gatacre, Rector of Rotherhithe; whereas the English outlaws knew little of either French or German. His relations to them were very much that of the πρόξενος towards the stranger under his patronage in ancient Athens. He interpreted for them, instructed them in Swiss etiquette, presented them to their Excellencies of Berne, and helped them to draw up

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a written address of thanks for hospitality received. The reply of the Bernese Councillors was in the following cordial terms :—

"September the 3rd, 1663.

"Concerning the three *English* gentlemen who have for some time resided at *Vevey*, and have this day presented in our Assembly of Council their thanks for our Protection formerly granted to them; 'tis resolved that they shall be saluted on our part with a Present of Wine, and that Mr Treasurer *Steiger*, with Mr. *Kilberger* and you our *Doyne*, do acquaint them with our affection and good Will to them, and assure them of the continuation of the same for the time to come."

This was satisfactory. A dinner party followed at which the Present of Wine was duly handed over. After the banquet the regicides prepared to escort their hosts to their houses. "But these truly noble Persons would by no means permit us; and being desirous that their favours to us should be yet more public, they invited us to go to the Church, that all Men might see they were not ashamed to own what they had done."

So the regicides attended public worship with the Mace carried in front of them, and exchanged many compliments with their entertainers, and returned to their place of residence at Vevey.

Here they continued in correspondence with their good friend Dr. Hummel. A sheaf of their letters has been discovered in the Berne Archives and published by Professor Alfred Stern. These, however, contain little information on

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any events of public importance; their interest lying rather in the light they throw upon triviality of the outlaws' lives. Ludlow himself, indeed, occasionally touches on the great events in which he had played, and still hoped to play, his part. But in the main these letters are about the danger of epidemics, the treatment of diseases, and the general condition of the outlaws' health. It is—

"Mr. Durens gave us the receipt of a water which he entitles a preservative under God against the plague, the colic, stone, and all the affections of the noble parts, of which I have sent you by this bearer a glassful."—It is:

"Sir,

"I am bold by this bearer to present you with a small proportion of my tobacco, both new and old, whether of them pleaseth you best to accept of.... I find by experience that tobacco doth me good, though not to keep the gout quite away, yet to mitigate the pain thereof when it comes."

It is:

"It having pleased God to visit me now for above one year and a half past with the grievous pain of the gravel or stone.... (I.).... therefore am desirous to use all means I can, with the blessing of almighty God, to free me, or at least ease me of my aforesaid distemper, and am going towards the Spaw or other waters in Germany by which many have with the Lord's blessing received much ease, and some have been cured of the like distempers and infirmities."

And so on from triviality to triviality; the correspondence

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of the regicides hardly ever soaring above these planes of thought.

Their lives, however, were not absolutely equable. Hardly had they received the definite promise of Bernese protection than they also received urgent warning to be on their guard against assassins; and evidence of plots to take their lives was speedily forthcoming. Mysterious boats, manned by men who offered no clear account of themselves, but who evidently came from Savoy, were found moored in unfrequented parts of the Lake shore; armed ruffians of suspicious mien were noticed lurking near the roads which the regicides must traverse on their way to church; innkeepers reported the arrival of mysterious strangers whom they did not believe to have arrived for any honest purpose; a Savoyard of equivocal appearance was seen waiting for Mr. Lisle to come out of church and heard to mutter: *Le bougre ne viendra pas;* a man who was arrested on suspicion, and put to the question in the Castle of Chillon, revealed the details of a design, subsidized by the King of England, to kill or kidnap Ludlow and his companions. Lisle was frightened, and withdrew hurriedly to Lausanne, believing that he would be safer there. As it happened he had hardly got there when he was murdered.

The deed was done when the victim was on his way to church, on the morning of Thursday, August 11, 1664:—

"The villain that murdered him had waited his coming at a barber's shop, where he pretended to want something for his Teeth, till seeing *Mr. Lisle* at distance he stept out of the Shop, and as he came by, saluted him. Then following him into the Churchyard, he drew a carabine from

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under his Cloak, and shot him into the Back. With the recoil of the Piece the Villain's Hat was beaten off, and he himself falling over a piece of timber, dropp'd his Gun, which he left behind him, and as soon as he had recovered himself, running to his companion who held the led Horse, he mounted and made his escape. Thus died *John Lisle*, Esq., Son to *Sir William Lisle* of the *Isle of Wight*, a Member of the Great Parliament, one of the Council of State, Commissioner of the Great Seal, and one of the Assistants to the Lord President, in the High Court of Justice that was erected for the Trial of the late King."

As a result of this outrage, fresh and more stringent precautions were taken for Ludlow's protection at Vevey. He and his friends occupied, at this time, a Lodging adjoining one of the Town Gates, situated on the edge of the Lake, at the South East corner of the market-place. They were permitted to build a guard house whence they could keep a look-out for suspicious craft coming from the direction of Savoy, and were expressly empowered by resolution of the Town Council to ring a large alarm bell on the approach of danger. The success of Lieutenant-General Ludlow in impressing the functionaries of the Canton de Vaud with a full and lively sense of his importance is nowhere better illustrated than in the passage of his memoirs which relates how they fell in with his views as to the steps to be taken to ensure his safety.

"I proposed.... that upon the sound of the great Bell at *Vevey*, upon the firing of a great Gun, or the view of a Fire upon any of the Towers of the said Place, they should take Arms, secure the Passes, and seize all unknown persons

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in order to carry them before the Bailiff; and that if these signals should happen to be given in the Night, they should be appointed to repair with their Arms to our Lodgings at *Vevey*, to receive such orders as should be necessary. The Chatelain approved the Proposition, and desir'd, That such an order might be prepared, promising he would send it to the Bailiff to be signed; which being drawn up and sent to the Castle of *Chillon*, the Bailiff most readily signed four orders of the same Tenour, and directed them to *Vevey*, *Moutre*, the *Tower* [1] and *Blonay*, with Injunction that they should be published two several times in the Market places, and before the Churches of the said Places, that none might pretend cause of Ignorance."

It is a striking picture this of Lieutenant-General Edmund Ludlow anxiously searching the horizon, with one hand screening his eyes and the other gripping the bell-rope, his soul sustained the while by the reflection that all the business of the citizens was subordinated to the task of preserving the men who had slain the Lord's anointed. He must have had a great personal charm to be able to make strangers, whose language he hardly knew, so intensely interested in his fortunes. We have a further picture when we read how the local magnates came, more than once, to visit him in his house by the water-side, and stationed an imposing company of armed retainers at his door, for no other purpose than to make their high regard for him evident to all the citizens. We have also clear proof of the sincerity of their friendship in the curt language in which the Bernese refused to surrender their guests when an emissary of King

[1] I.e., La Tour de Peilz, sometimes called Vevey la Tour.

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Charles II offered to make it worth their while to do so. They "ordered the Person he had engaged to inform them of his Business, to let him know that they approved neither of his Person nor of his Propositions, and that he might return by the same way he came." The saying *Point d'argent point de Suisse* was not to apply where regicides were concerned.

For the rest there is little to be told about Ludlow's life at Vevey. He was, at one time, mixed up in plots to restore the Commonwealth with Dutch assistance; but dropped the matter because he did not trust the Dutch. In July 1689, he solemnly bade farewell to the Vevey magistrates, assuring them that "the Lord who has provided for me, during my suffering and exile, a very favourable asylum, in conducting me by His column of fire to your benign and equitable government, now calls me to take a tour in my own country and do my best to fortify the hands of our Gideon;" but it was not long before he was back in Vevey again, King William III, having offered a reward of £200 for his arrest.

Nothing further is known of him. His companions in exile had already died: Cowley in 1666; Love in 1682; Broughton in 1687. He himself lived until November 1692, when he died in the seventy-third year of his age. He was buried in St. Martin's Church, where a monument to his memory, bearing a suitable inscription, was erected by his widow.

But we must leave Lieutenant-General Edmund Ludlow, and revert to religious affairs.

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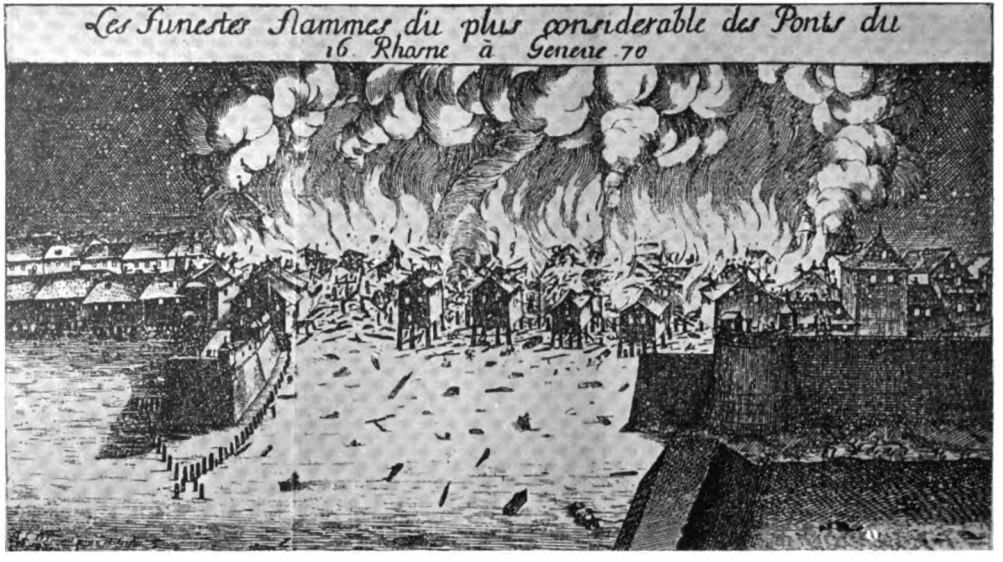


THE GREAT FIRE OF GENEVA, 1680.

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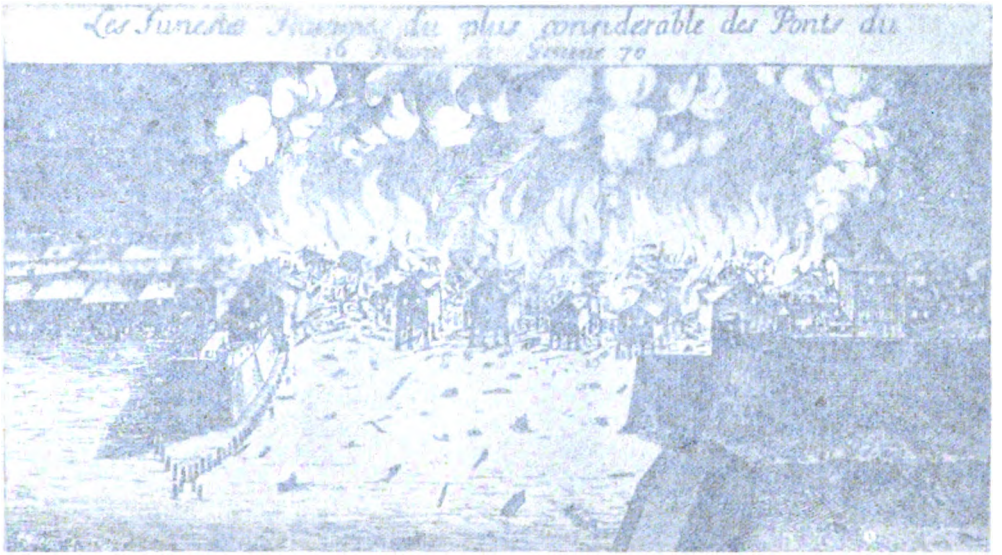
[illegible]

[illegible]

The Revocation of [illegible] pression upon Geneva [illegible] Refugees. It is true [illegible] 800 in a single day, and [illegible] were not [illegible] [illegible] Germany or Holland. Geneva [illegible] was jealous of its prosperity, [illegible] trade [illegible] for [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] of that gradual modernising of Geneva to which reference has been made.

Other religious exiles were, indeed, hospitably received at about the same period; but [illegible] They were persecuted [illegible] and they suffered from homesickness. In [illegible] they crossed the Lake, and set out upon [illegible] march across the mountains, which [illegible] the Chartreuse Rentée, and earned undying [illegible] Arnaud, [illegible] and men of war. It is a [illegible] this is not the place in which to tell it. [illegible] with Geneva, our subject must be [illegible]

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## CHAPTER XIV

THE PIETISTS—FRANÇOIS MAGNY—MAJOR DAVEL—NICOLAS FATIO DE DUILLERS—SAINT GEORGES DE MARSAY—MARIE HUBER

THE Revocation of the Edict of Nantes made less impression upon Genevan history than might have been expected. Refugees, it is true, poured in; we hear of the arrival of 800 in a single day, and of 1,450 in a single week. They were not encouraged, however, or even, except in rare instances, allowed to stay, but passed on to seek a home in Germany or Holland. Geneva, it seems, being now prosperous, was jealous of its prosperity, and desired to entertain neither trade rivals nor pauper immigrants, even though these were fugitives for conscience' sake. We have here a proof and illustration of that gradual modernising of Geneva to which reference has been made.

Other religious exiles were, indeed, hospitably received at about the same period; but these did not remain. They were persecuted Protestants from the Waldensian valleys, and they suffered from home-sickness. In 1689, therefore, they crossed the Lake, and set out upon that memorable march across the mountains, which is known to history as the Glorieuse Rentrée, and earned undying fame for Henri Arnaud, pastor and man of war. It is a stirring story, but this is not the place in which to tell it. Our business is with Geneva; our subject must be Pietism and the Pietists.

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This Pietism is not the easiest thing in the world to define; for it was a habit of mind rather than a creed. Perhaps we may best describe it as a protest against the tendency of the reformed religion to decline into a system of religious jurisprudence. It is a tendency inherent in every religion built—as, perhaps, all religions must be—upon a creed; and when it reveals itself the protest is almost certain to be heard. Christianity itself—looked at from one point of view—was a protest against the religious jurisprudence of the Mosaic dispensation. But Christianity, after declining into Roman Catholicism, became, by degrees, unduly dependent upon externals, till the reformers protested and tried, according to their lights, to spiritualise it. They did their work and died, imagining, no doubt, that they had done it once for all. Their work was not the less, but rather the more, perishable, because it was so elaborate. Calvin had drafted what may fairly be called a religious Code Napoléon which, for a period, served its purpose. But it was hardly a century old before it had begun to seem inadequate to the men with whom religion was a real and living force. It only appealed to the intellect; whereas true religion, they felt, should have its mainspring in the emotions, and express itself, not in ceremonies, but in conduct. The men who reasoned thus were given the nick-name of Pietists; they accepted it as an honourable appellation.

One first hears of Pietism in Germany, where Spener professed it in the face of persecution. There is little to lay hold of in his system, beyond the general sentiment that sacerdotalism is obnoxious even in a Protestant disguise, and that religion is a matter of inward illumination rather

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than of outward conformity with any body of doctrines. It admitted a certain element of mysticism—the gifts of prophecy, and of speaking with tongues, and the like; but these things were accidental, not essential. The attitude towards orthodoxy—whether Lutheran or Calvinistic—was hardly to be called contentious. The Pietists did not want to overthrow it, but to verify it by insisting that religion must be a matter of emotional experience as well as of intellectual assent—that every man should feel the burden of his sins, and rejoice in the assurance of his salvation. In that sense—and in that sense only—they were innovators.

The sect found many adherents, and has exercised a wide and lasting influence. The Moravians derive from the Pietists; so do the Methodists; so too, perhaps,—though less directly—do Plymouth Brethren, Irvingites, Salvationists. In Geneva, as was natural, Pietism found a congenial soil; and the thing itself seems to have existed there even before the name was invented. What Spener taught at Halle, he had in a measure learnt from the Genevan pastor Labadie.

Labadie was a Jesuit who had been converted to Protestantism. Roman Catholic historians accused him of having corrupted a whole conventful of Franciscan nuns, as a prelude to his apostasy. But they adduced no evidence of their charges; and in making them were presumably only acting up to the time-honoured maxim of the Jesuits: *Calomniez, calomniez! Il en restera toujours quelque chose.* What is certain is that no such scandal attended Labadie's pastorate at Geneva; the objection to him there being that he was altogether too pious for a City in which piety had



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come to be tempered with worldliness. The fact is brought out clearly in the passage in which the historian Picot speaks of his removal to another sphere of usefulness in 1666.

"The magistracy saw without regret the departure of a man who, in spite of his distinguished talent for preaching, had made himself almost intolerable by his restless and scheming character. He often used to speak evil of the magistrates in the pulpit, and in foreign countries he used to disparage the town and University. His sermons were excessively and ridiculously long; on Sunday evenings in winter he sometimes used to extend them well into the night. At his own house too, he used to hold gatherings at which more than a hundred persons of both sexes used to meet, forming a special religious sect. The Council had often admonished him for his doings, but always without result. [1]

These private assemblies—which presumably partook of the nature of prayer-meetings—were, as we shall see, the chief, if not the only outward visible sign of Pietism. They continued to be held at Geneva long after Labadie had gone to Holland, where he ultimately founded the little sect of mystics which takes its name from him. A thumb-nail sketch of the position of the Genevan Pietists in 1718 may be taken from Picot. He says:—

"It was observed that there were in the City a considerable number of Pietists of both sexes. The Council and

[1] Retiring to Middleburg, in Holland, Labadie founded a new sect—*L'Eglise de Jésus Christ retirée du monde.* Elizabeth, princess Palatine, joined it; under the name of Labadistes, it continued to exist until quite recent times. He was the author of many pious books, and a friend of the pietist writer, Antoinette Bourignon.

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the Consistory which had long treated them with leniency, finally thought it well to give serious attention to their behaviour. It was established that these Sectarians used frequently to meet together, to the number of thirty or forty, and that some of them claimed to be inspired, and communicated their prophecies and the results of their inspiration, while others set themselves up as preachers. It was also demonstrated that a certain number of women belonging to the sect fell into idle habits, to the point of neglecting their families and their household duties; though it was true, on the other hand, that the Pietists attended Church and received the Holy Communion just like Protestants, and led a regular life, and spoke of nothing but piety at their meetings, and were united together in a touching and gentle charity."

Enquiries were instituted—probably their houses were searched—to ascertain what books they read. It was found that the principal works in their libraries were the *De Imitatione Christi*, the Pilgrim's Progress, and the writings of Madame Guyon, [1] and Madame Bourignon [2]—books

[1] Madame Guyon (1648—1717) was the great Catholic Quietist. Her mystical writings got her into trouble, and she was locked up at Vincennes and in the Bastille, where she composed sacred songs. After her release, in 1702, she became famous for her works of charity.

[2] Antoinette Bourignon (1616—1680) ran away from home to avoid marriage with a man she did not care for, and sought the protection of the clergy. At Amsterdam she adopted Protestantism, and published books from a private printing-press. Accused of sorcery, she had to leave that City, and wandered about, through Holland and Germany, as far as Hamburg.

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hardly to be regarded as of compromising character or pernicious tendency. Nevertheless the Council and Consistory summoned the leaders of the movement before them, and "censured them mildly, pointing out that their meetings were dangerous and exhorting them to hold no more of them;" but Picot proceeds:—

"In spite of this, however, the sect continued in existence; and in 1731 the Council employed severe measures against a man named Donadille who went in for prophecy, and, under the pretext of divine inspiration, was indiscreet in his manner with women."

The narrative is unsympathetic. It is evidently with reluctance that Picot admits that, with the exception mentioned, there was no great harm in the Pietists; he seems to have viewed them as amiable lunatics at the best. But they served a useful purpose in registering their protest against the spiritual barrenness of Calvinism. As regards their influence, we shall see that they bent Calvinism though they could not break it; and there were several interesting personages included in their ranks.

There was François Magny of Vevey, whose principal claim to be remembered lies, perhaps, in the fact that he taught religion to Mademoiselle Louise de la Tour who, having married M. de Warens and run away from him, passed on the precepts of Pietism, in somewhat singular circumstances, to Jean Jacques Rousseau. But this is to anticipate.

We first hear of Magny in connection with a religious controversy in which he engaged with Elie Merlat, pastor, of Lausanne, in 1699. Merlat had dedicated to him a volume of sermons on the subject of True Piety. He replied by writing a book, now lost, which the Lausanne pastors sup-

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pressed, acting on instructions from the Bernese magistrates. He was also interrogated, arrested, taken to Berne, and invited to justify himself. Little that was really damaging could be proved against him. The most serious charge against him seems to have been that he had refused to acknowledge persons who were not Pietists as his brothers; and this he strenuously denied. It was also established that he had taken part in religious gatherings at the house of the Mesdemoiselles de la Tour—the aunts of Madame de Warens; but it could not be established that he had ever said anything at these meetings to which exception could reasonably be taken. One of his *obiter dicta* was, for instance, that "it was not enough to be present at sermons in the body, but that the heart should also be there, and disposed to profit from them;" and there was clearly no particular harm in that. He also gave out that "Pietism is, in a general way, a renewal of the Virtue of the spirit of God"—a sentiment which by no means savoured of heresy. Ultimately, however, he was prosecuted for translating a book in which Jean Tenn had protested that Luther ought to have tried to awaken the individual conscience instead of founding a new sect; and he fled to Geneva, where he lived for several years. Here, too, he had occasional trouble with the magistrates, though no serious harm ever came to him. His religious influence was such, however, that, when he at last received permission to return to Vevey, two young women of good family—Mesdemoiselles Jeanne Bonnet and Judith Rousseau—left their parents' houses to accompany him, albeit from none but the most pious motives. We need not follow his fortunes any further.

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Secondly there was Major Davel, whose memory is kept alive by the fact that one of the steam-boats on the Lake of Geneva is called after him. He was a mercenary soldier, whose merits had attracted the attention of such good judges as the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugène. Living, after his campaigns were over, at Cully, he one day mustered the militia and marched into Lausanne to free the Canton of Vaud from Bernese domination. Arrested and asked for explanations, he replied that he had been guided by direct inspiration from on High. The defence did not save him, and he perished on the scaffold in 1723. It was left to La Harpe to accomplish, without bloodshed, the revolution at which he had aimed.

Thirdly there was Nicolas Fatio de Duillers whom Bishop Burnet spoke of as "a man of genius," as "an incomparable mathematician and philosopher," and as "born to carry learning some sizes beyond what it had already attained." He was admitted to the Royal Society at 24, and to the French Academy of Sciences at a still earlier age; was a friend of Newton's, the author of a valuable work on navigation and a contributor to the *Philosophical Transactions* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*. But, with all these distinctions behind him, he abandoned mathematics for mysticism, and attempted to introduce into England the prophetic trances which had originated among the *illuminés* of the Cévennes. The result was that, in the reign of Anne, he stood in an English pillory, with this inscription pinned to him:—

"Nicolas Fatio, convicted for abetting and favouring Elias Marion in his wicked and counterfeit prophecies, and causing them to be printed and published to terrify the Queen's people."

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Fourthly there was M. de Saint Georges de Marsay, the brother of the English minister at Geneva. He, like Major Davel, had been a soldier of fortune, under the Elector of Hanover; but he abandoned the profession early, and retired, with two companions, a fellow-soldier and a pastor, to practise austerities in the Canton de Vaud. His case is chiefly interesting because he left an autobiography in which he described in detail the manner of his life. It is worth quoting from at some length for the sake of the picture that it gives us:—

"We inaugurated our community of hermits, all three of us together, living in solitude and retirement. The order of our life, so far as externals were concerned, was regulated thus: We rose at four, and worked each of us at his own task, in rigid silence. But one of us used first to read a chapter of the Holy Scriptures.

"M. Baratier looked after the household work and the cooking; M. Cordier and I used to go, from four to seven, during the Spring of 1711, and dig up the earth to make a field, in which we sowed wheat so that we might have bread. At seven we used to return to the house and breakfast on a little dry bread which we made and baked ourselves. After that, each of us worked until mid-day; Cordier at spinning wool, and myself at sewing or knitting. Cordier also attended to all commissions and messages, going out to fetch anything that was required; while I also fetched grass for our cow, and leaves for its litter, and cleaned out the stall. At mid-day we dined. Baratier used to cook us the same dinner every day for a week. One week it was a dish of peas, and nothing else before

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or after it except a piece of bread; the second week it was hulled oats; the third it was buck-wheat gruel; and so on week after week. After dinner one of us would read something from the writings of Mademoiselle Bourignon, and then each of us went back to his work until four, which was our supper-time. The supper consisted of a dish of vegetables—a salad of turnips, or carrots, or whatever else was in season. After supper we stayed together working in our room until nine, when we went to bed. That is how we passed our days, observing silence in everything that we did, remembering that we were in the presence of God, and only speaking when it was absolutely necessary. We drank nothing but cold water, and our only treat was when it pleased M. Baratier to make our gruel with milk.

"I was like a child that knows nothing save how to do the work assigned to it in the presence of its father and in accordance with its father's will. All my task was to dig in the presence of God, and to knit. We had no regular hour for devotions, but we tried, according to the teaching of Mademoiselle Bourignon, to convert all our actions into prayers.

"Drying up, as the days went by, I became so thin that my skin clung to my bones, and began to dry up, to blacken, and to crack."

This asceticism, however, did not, in the case of the Pietists, imply celibacy. On the contrary, we read:—

"As I was sitting, one day, under a tree with my knitting, it was revealed to me that, if I really and truly wished to give myself without reserve to God, I must marry Mademoiselle de Calemberg. It was also revealed to me in what

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manner we must live together—that is to say that we must practise continence. On the following day I went to see Mdlle. de Calemberg, and informed her of these revelations; and it appeared that God had also made his will in this matter known to her. Consequently, a few weeks afterwards (July 29, 1712) my comrade M. Baratier married us, in Madame Castel's parlour. We possessed seven pence halfpenny between us at the time of our marriage."

It is gratifying to be able to add that the marriage contracted in these strange circumstances turned out well. At first the happy pair were supported by the voluntary contributions of their neighbours. Then M. de Marsay remembered that an inheritance was due to him on the division of his father's estate. He went to Geneva to claim it, arranged that his brother should take the capital and pay him an annuity, on which he lived, wandering about from place to place, until 1755. It is said that, as he grew older, he abandoned his eccentricities, and was content to live an ordinarily Godly life, like other people. But we must leave him, and consider the case of our fifth Pietist, Mademoiselle Marie Huber. In her case we meet the religious fanaticism which develops with the years until it joins hands with right reason at the last.

The Huber family came to Geneva from Schaffhausen; but Marie's parents migrated, while she was still a child, to Lyon. The few facts that are known about her life are mostly contained in a biographical dictionary of the celebrities of Lyon, by Abbé Pernetti; though something has been added from sources of information still in manuscript, and published by M. Eugène Ritter in a Lausanne periodical.

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She was born in 1695, and brought up in an atmosphere of Pietism, tinged by the peculiar mysticism of the Cévennes. Her sisters, as well as herself, were accustomed to fall into trances and prophecy; and it is recorded that when her younger sister, Adrienne, was in a trance, she used to protest that the trances of the third sister, Marianne, were not genuine, and that it was God's will that she should be brought to her senses by a whipping. But this is by the way. Of Marie, Abbé Pernetti tells us that she was conspicuously beautiful, and that "from the age of seventeen onwards she was so afraid of the dangers which her beauty might entail for her, that she abandoned herself to a life of austere retirement, and to the practice of good works—a practice which she never interrupted under any pretext."

One interruption there was, however, to her life of retirement if not to her good works. When she was 22, a certain *illuminé* named Pagez came to her, professing to bring her a message from on High. She was to "go to Geneva and convert the inhabitants." More than that: she was to "present her message to the ministers." Her family raised no objections—objections probably would not have weighed with her if she had encountered them—and she departed on her mission.

It was a daring enterprise—to attempt to awaken a sense of sin in the City which John Knox had described as the most perfect school of Christ since the Apostles; and though the details are wanting, it is at least clear that neither the religious nor the secular authorities welcomed the evangelist with open arms. From her brother's correspondence we gather that she "had every possible kind of

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trouble with the magistrates," and that her parents at Lyon received "a perfect hail-storm of letters" from relatives at Geneva who considered themselves compromised by her proceedings. After a while, however, her health broke down, and she withdrew, and lived in retirement, with two of her sisters, at the village of Millery. For the rest her history is only the history of her writings; but it still is less the writings that interest us than the personality behind them.

The case, be it carefully noted, is that of a young woman who buried herself alive in a village, and grew into an old maid without leaving it. Most of her time was taken up with charity; but, now and again, she wrote a book, and published it anonymously. The veil of her anonymity was never lifted during her life-time; and there were no means, in those days, of advertising a book, or forcing it upon public notice. Yet almost every book that this old maid wrote in her quiet village made a noise that echoed through Europe. Her writings were translated into English and German, and passed through several French editions. Professors of renown, both Roman Catholic and Protestant—Sinsart, Abbé de Munster, on the one hand, and Abraham Ruchat, pastor of Lausanne and historian of the Reformation on the other—took up their pens to confute her. Some of them denounced her as an Englishman; others as a German. None of them perceived, or even guessed, that it was a woman who had stirred their indignation. It is impossible not to admire a woman who, living so far away from the centres of theological strife, and caring so little for the gratification of her vanity, was nevertheless so successful in setting the theologians by the ears.

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Equally interesting, however, and not less admirable, is the religious evolution which the comparison of Marie Huber's successive publications brings to light. It is not to the old maid who spends her life in visiting the village poor that we look, as a rule, for broad and ever-broadening views on the profound problems of our human destiny. But in Marie Huber's case one finds them. Her first book, published in 1722, *L'Ecrit sur le Jeu et les Plaisirs*, is little more than a tract written to establish the sinfulness of all amusement. A long interval of silence followed. It has been suggested that, during that interval, Marie Huber was set thinking by the allegations of immorality brought against the Pietists, and more particularly by the case of the Pietist Donadille, whose gallantries, for which he claimed divine authority, got him into trouble at Geneva; but there is no evidence either for or against the allegation. What we do know is that when Marie Huber next broke silence in 1731, it was to denounce the doctrine of eternal punishment, in a work entitled *Etat des Ames séparés des Corps.*

This is the work that was attacked by Pastor Abraham Ruchat of Lausanne. He was a good man on the whole; but it seemed to him that, in a divinely ordered universe, hell was the ideal complement of heaven. "I am one of those," Marie Huber retorted, anticipating the modern sentiment, "who could not be absolutely happy, if they knew that there were other people who were absolutely miserable." And this was only the beginning of her heresies. Though she reserved her opinion about the miracles, she expressly denied that they proved anything; and in her *Lettres sur la Religion essentielle à l'homme distinguée de ce qui n'est qu'*

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*accessoire*, which appeared in 1738, she disputed the doctrine of imputed righteousness, deprecated subtleties about the Trinity in Unity, and abandoned the view that the Bible is, in the ordinary sense of the word, "inspired." "The Holy Scriptures," she said, "are not to be regarded as the truth, but only as a testimony to the truth."

And there we may leave Marie Huber's religious system. If we subjected it to closer analysis, we should probably find it impossible to make head or tail of it; but such analysis seems neither fair nor necessary. Many more pretentious literary systems would stand analysis no better; and Marie Huber was the least pretentious of theologians. The striking thing in the story is after all the picture—the picture of the old maid, isolated in her village, finding her way to the conclusions of the Deists by a very different road, shedding dogmas as she ceased to need them, without losing her faith in God, and resigned, at the close of her life, to sum up the results of her long meditations in these simple, humble words:—

"Putting all speculation and all discussion on one side, I am content to acquiesce, in good faith, in whatever seems to be established as true and good and just, guiding my judgments and my conduct by that for the present, but ready to believe and do better to-morrow, or whenever that which is better is made known to me. There is my philosophy; there, if you prefer the word, is my Religion."

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## CHAPTER XV

### MADAME DE WARENS—HER CHILDHOOD—HER FLIGHT TO SAVOY—THE NEW LIGHT THROWN UPON THIS INCIDENT BY M. DE WARENS' LETTER

From Marie Huber we pass to Madame de Warens, to whom Jean Jacques Rousseau—the great high priest of those who kiss and tell—has given a great, if an unenviable celebrity. Her career was almost exactly contemporaneous with Marie Huber's; like Marie Huber she began life as a Pietist, and grew out of Pietism as she got older; but there the resemblance between these two notable women ends.

The world's view of Madame de Warens has always been—and perhaps always will be—taken from Rousseau's "Confessions." Even so sober a writer as Mr. John Morley accepts most of the statements in the "Confessions" without attempting to go behind them. But the "Confessions" is a suspicious source of information, full of demonstrable inaccuracies. Sometimes, it seems, the writer is inaccurate through ignorance. At other times there is every reason to believe that he is deliberately lying for the gratification of his vanity. Let us see if we cannot, by the use of more tangible and trustworthy evidence, reconstruct the real Madame de Warens.

She was a Mademoiselle de la Tour—a niece of the Mesdemoiselles de la Tour at whose house Magny used to

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hold his prayer-meetings; she herself had lived for a time in Magny's house. While still a child, she was married to M. de Warens. In 1726—at the age of seven and twenty she left her husband, fled to Savoy, embraced the Roman Catholic faith, was awarded a pension, and thanks to the "Confessions," achieved immortal fame as the benefactress of Jean Jacques. According to Jean Jacques she also, at her own suggestion, became his mistress; and all his biographers have accepted his word in the matter. We will consider presently whether this claim, which has been admitted by the world for a century and a quarter, can be substantiated. First, however, we will glance at Madame de Warens' earlier days, and observe how much that is essential is left out in Jean Jacques' account of her conversion and removal from Protestant Vevey to Catholic Annecy.

It was not enough for him to represent her as a sinner, however charming: he must also depict her as a saint, however frail. His love of paradox would not be satisfied with less. So he holds her up to admiration as a person who had sacrificed her worldly position and advantages for conscience' sake, and sums up the matter thus:—

"She had abandoned great possessions and a brilliant rank in her own country in order to follow the voice of the Lord."

It is possible, of course, that he told the story as he heard it. He was a very young man when he heard it, and he was not questioning Madame de Warens either in the confession box or in the witness box. He may not have known—or he may have attached no importance to the fact that, when she crossed the Lake in obedience to the voice

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of the Lord, she took with her 9,622 florins' worth of plate, linen, and furniture, belonging to her husband. Such was the case, however, and subsequent critics have judged that simple piety was insufficient by itself to explain this particular feature of the withdrawal; while recent research in public and private archives, has brought many new facts to light. Among other things there has been discovered a letter, rather longer than a magazine article, in which her husband, M. de Warens, tells the story of her treatment of him from a point of view which is naturally different from either hers or Rousseau's.[1] It is a letter which illuminates the situation, not only because of the new facts which it discloses, but also because of the light which it incidentally sheds upon the character of the writer.

He was a good man—a very good man; a man who always did his duty—and sometimes more than his duty—in the state of life to which he was called. In the matter of "settlements," he appears to have behaved most handsomely. He took his wife from a boarding school to marry her, and paid all her bills, which amounted to a figure which may well have frightened him when he reflected that, for the future, she would have an implied authority to pledge his credit. What with the accounts of the dressmaker, the glover, the boot-maker, and the necessity of replacing a "foot-warmer" belonging to the head-mistress which Mdlle. de la Tour had broken, the total was no less than 3,068 florins. But M. de Warens paid up like a lover, and took a receipt, and kept it, like a man of business.

[1] Published by M. Eugène Ritter in the *Revue Suisse* in 1884.

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So far so good. M. de Warens had established an indisputable claim to his wife's gratitude. But gratitude is not quite the same thing as love; and it is impossible to prove that M. de Warens was loveable. He was just, and stern, and stubbornly religious; his consciousness of his own respectability and piety illuminates the whole of his long apology; but there is nothing in it, from beginning to end, to suggest a reason why a young woman of bright and animated disposition should have preferred him to other men, equally pious and respectable. So his wife, whose disposition was certainly bright and animated, in spite of her Pietist training, became bored, and sought distraction. Some women, in the circumstances, would have sought distraction with lovers, others with religion; Madame de Warens sought it in commercial enterprise. In 1725—when she was 26 years of age—she decided to start the manufacture of silk stockings in a country in which silk stockings were not much worn; and for a time it seemed as though silk stockings represented the whole of life to her.

Her husband was very accommodating. He spent 7,500 florins in fitting up the factory, and put about 8,000 florins into the business as working capital. Unfortunately he left the conduct of the business to his wife, and the result was what might have been anticipated. The adventure was unprofitable from the first. By the spring of 1726 creditors were clamouring for their dues, and there were no assets except the petty cash. It was at that period, and in those circumstances, that Madame de Warens crossed the Lake in obedience to the voice of the Lord, but not forgetting to take plenty of plate, linen, and furniture with her, and



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was received as a proselyte into the Roman Catholic Church, and was rewarded with a pension by the King of Sardinia. Considering all things, it requires no exceptional cynicism to suggest that she did not take that journey primarily for the purpose of saving her soul from hell, but that the purpose of saving her property from her creditors was simultaneously before her mind.

So much for Rousseau's allegation that his benefactress "had abandoned great possessions and a brilliant rank in her own country." The story of her flight is not told by him in any detail; and M. de Conzié [1]—the chief of the other authorities on the subject—adds little of consequence to his narrative. Neither of them, apparently, knew much about it. But M. de Warens knew all about it, and has told.

It seems that, already, in 1725, Madame de Warens had visited Savoy, and had been so cordially received that she told everyone, on her return, that she liked Savoy much better than the Pays de Vaud. During the following winter she was ill.

"My uncle, M. de Vullierens (writes M. de Warens) having done us the honour of coming to see us, she told him in so many words that he would hear, in the course of the summer, of an extraordinary event connected with a lady of the country. This is a proof that she was preparing her *coup* long beforehand."

[1] He lived at Chambéry at the same time as Madame de Warens, and was on friendly terms both with her and with Jean Jacques, with whom, at one time, he corresponded. His reminiscences of Madame de Warens were printed in Vol I of *Mémoires et documents de la Société Savoisienne d'histoire et d'archæologie.*

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It is possible, though such anecdotes are too easily invented to be convincing. But it is at least certain that Madame de Warens laid her plans for her departure, and the clandestine removal of her goods, with an ingenuity worthy of a better cause:—

"In the spring of 1726 she took the precaution of sending for M. Viridet, a doctor at Morges, with the idea of getting herself ordered to take the waters—a remedy which is a saddle to fit all horses. M. Viridet, who knew that her complaint was more mental uneasiness than anything else, was careful not to oppose her when she expressed her determination to take those of Amphion. Under this pretext, she made everything ready for the execution of her project."

Circumstances smiled upon her.

"At the end of June, 1726, a flood did considerable damage to Vevey and the neighbourhood. Cellars, gardens, cider-presses—everything that lay low, in fact—were under water. Hardly had matters been put straight than she took the opportunity of a general spring cleaning to put all the best and finest linen on one side."

So, while M. de Warens, who was a member of the Vevey Council, was inspecting the damage done by the flood, Madame de Warens was packing. She was accustomed to travel with plenty of luggage, so that the number of her boxes excited no remark. She got them all on board a boat while her husband was having supper with M. Couvreu; he was so little suspicious that he went down to the quay and saw her off. A few days later, he visited her at Evian, still supposing that his plate and linen was safely locked away in the usual cupboards. During her stay there, she

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added insult to injury by asking him, when he got home, to send her a certain gold-headed cane, and Bayle's Historical and Critical Dictionary, in five volumes, which she had inadvertently left behind. M. de Warens promised, and his narrative continues:—

"My travelling companions came to visit her. We took our coffee together; then, going out, they said they would let me know when they were ready to start. During the rest of the time that I was with her she kept sighing, and saying from time to time, 'My dear husband, what will become of you?' Apparently this was the remains of the remorse of conscience; but its voice was soon stifled, as is proved by what happened on the very eve of our departure. As she was subject to the vapours, I thought that this was only a symptom of that malady, and I tried to calm her.

"The hour of our departure arrives. I am informed of it. I take leave of her. She shows me as much friendship as she has ever shown me in her life. She accompanies me outside the house, the back of which looks on the Lake, as far as the water's edge, with tears in her eyes. I saw a few of the King's guards hanging about. It would never have occurred to me that they were there for the purpose of watching us. That was the case, however, and I have since learnt that my deserter had already pledged her word to the Bishop of Annecy. We started. Her eyes followed the boat. But of what dissimulation is not a woman capable? I learnt on good authority, though long afterwards, that hardly had she turned her back than her servant maid said to her, 'Madame, you have a good husband.' 'If you think so, take him,' she replied. 'He will soon be without a wife.'"

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It is a sad story of marital blindness, though it misses sublimity because the blindness was clearly not that of affection. Nothing is more evident from the whole tone of the letter—and more particularly, perhaps, from the scornful passage about the "vapours"—than that M. de Warens was not in love with his wife; while his subsequent proceedings prove to demonstration that her departure hurt his pride far more than it wounded his heart. As soon as he heard that his wife had left Evian under royal escort, a suspicion seized him. He rushed to the cupboards, burst them open, and discovered that they were empty. Then he jumped on his horse and rode post-haste to Geneva, hoping to get his property stopped and restored to him at the Custom House through which it would have to pass; but this hope was baffled by the fact that the seal of the King of Sardinia was on all the packages. Finally, with a view to litigation, he sat down and made a complete inventory of the goods removed. He omitted nothing in it—not a salt-cellar, nor a candle-stick, nor a mustard-pot, nor a snuff-box, nor a vase; he added notes explaining on what principles the value of the various articles was assessed. His whole attitude in short betokens a commercial rather than a sentimental mind.

This absence of all sentiment from situations in which sentiment of some sort might be expected to find a place is, indeed, the extraordinary feature of the story. We have had an elopement without a lover; there follows a pursuit resulting not in the capture of the fugitive, but in the drafting of a deed of settlement. Madame de Warens, as we have seen, was eloping not from her husband, but from her creditors. Her husband's feelings in the matter weighed

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with her as little as if he had been her butler. If he liked to embrace the Roman Catholic religion and join her at Annecy, she would be pleased to see him. If he preferred to remain at Vevey, it would be all the same to her. So she wrote to M. de Warens, assuring him that she prayed God "to touch his heart and illuminate him by His Holy Spirit;" and inviting him to come and see her and talk matters over.

He came. Though he called by appointment, he found Madame de Warens in bed. The reason was obvious. She "desired to cover a part of her confusion." But M. de Warens was not to be mollified by the device. Conquering the feelings of tenderness which the scene evoked, he sat down on the edge of the bed and proceeded to talk theology.

"I represented to her (he says) as forcibly as I could, that to abandon a Church, whose principles one has imbibed with one's mother's milk, and to throw oneself into the arms of another without previously examining its doctrines, would be a very wrong thing to do, even though the latter Church were the true one. I added that what aggravated her fault, and indeed made it inexcusable, was the fact that of all the Churches in the Christian world, the one which she had just left was in closest conformity with the purity of the primitive Church, in respect both of its dogmas and of its modes of worship; whereas, on the contrary, the doctrines of the Church which she had adopted were so filled with absurdities, fables, and gross errors, that it was impossible that she could really believe them, even though she might profess to do so. She might deceive men, but she could not deceive God."

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Beginning with these conciliatory remarks, M. de Warens proceeded to business of a more worldly character. What, he wanted to know, was Madame de Warens prepared to do for him? He had lent his name to her speculations in the silk stocking industry, and allowed her to borrow money on his credit to carry it on with. Consequently her creditors would look to him for payment. But she, on her part, had carried away plate, and linen, and furniture—to say nothing of Bayle's Historical & Critical Dictionary—to the value of 9,622 florins, while anything that she had left behind—the stocking factory itself, for instance—was liable to be confiscated by the State on account of her perversion. Really it was an exceedingly awkward situation.

"I quite perceive that," she said. "I know of no better remedy than that you should follow the plan I have proposed to you—change your religion and join me here."

"The remedy," said I, "is worse than the disease. How dare you make such a proposal to me?"

"You are wrong," she answered, "but I am quite willing to do whatever I can to assure you the peaceful possession of my property. It is only a question of how to set about it."

"There are two ways," said I; "a will in my favour, or a deed of gift. Neither of the two would prevent confiscation; but the latter might be of some service to me as against other claimants."

Preference was given to the deed of gift; for M. de Warens, having influence in high places, knew of means by which the threatened confiscation, of which he made so much, might be avoided. It was drawn up as quickly as possible. M. de Warens read it over, and suggested alterations which were

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agreed to. Then his wife introduced him to the Lady Superior, of the Convent in which she was staying, who made a desperate effort to convert him.

"Ah! sir," said the good lady, "is it not a pity that a man like you should live in error? Why don't you follow the example of your wife? Come and join us, and I assure you you will be well received."

"It is my boast, madam," replied the Calvinist, "to profess that which you call error."

"Then you believe," she asked, "that your wife will be damned."

"My religion teaches me to judge no one," was the answer.

Thus courtesies were exchanged until M. de Warens had to go. His wife enquired when he was coming to see her again; but, having the deed of gift in his pocket, he probably failed to see the use of further interviews. At all events he made no appointment, and never again met his wife. "As I was leaving," he writes, "she had a kind of fainting fit. The duration of it, however, was so short that it completed my conviction that she was a perfect comedian." A few weeks afterwards he got a letter from her which ended with these words: "I beg you to regard me henceforth as dead, and to think no more of me than if I really were so."

Thenceforward their lives ran in separate channels, and they communicated with each other only through their solicitors. In the fulness of time M. de Warens obtained a divorce on the ground of "malicious desertion," and was free to re-marry if he wished. He did not wish, his previous experiences not having been sufficiently encouraging;

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but he wrote a short poem on the subject, addressed to a lady of Lausanne, whither he had removed, who had endeavoured to arrange a match for him. It is still preserved in manuscript by his family, and runs as follows:—

Non, je ne serai plus constant dans mes amours,
Et je me fais vœu de badiner toujours.
Plûtot que de languir dans un cruel empire,
Vaut-il pas mieux de jour en jour changer?
En liberté à présent je respire
Et je mourrai plutôt que de me rengager,

which doggerel French may be rendered into the following doggerel English:—

No longer constant in my loves I'll be;
Henceforth flirtation is the thing for me.
Rather than pine beneath one cruel sway
'Twere well to change allegiance every day.
At present I am breathing freedom's breath;
Ere I become a slave I'll welcome death.

There, in the odour of poetry, M. de Warens may properly be left. It remains to follow the fortunes of his wife during that portion of her career which Rousseau has made famous.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### THE RELATIONS OF MADAME DE WARENS WITH ROUSSEAU—THE REASONS FOR DOUBTING THE ACCURACY OF ROUSSEAU'S NARRATIVE—MADAME DE WARENS' MISERABLE OLD AGE AND DEATH

According to M. de Conzié, who knew Madame de Warens well, and wrote out his recollections of her in his old age, her change of religion was not effected without a certain measure of *réclame*, and did not bring her that peace of mind which is popularly supposed to follow, as the night the day, the acceptance of the dogmas of the Church which claims to be infallible. As the royal party was entering the Evian Church, he tells us, she sprang from her chair, plucked the Bishop by the cassock, and threw herself at his feet, before the eyes of all, exclaiming:— *In manus tuas, domine, commendo spiritum meum!* But, years afterwards, she made a confession to M. de Conzié:—

"My dear friend," she said to him, "will you believe me when I tell you, that for two years after my abjuration of Protestantism, I never went to bed without feeling a kind of goose-flesh over all my body, resulting from the perplexity into which I was plunged by my reflections on my change of creed? This long uncertainty was a terrible thing for me, seeing that I have always believed in a future of eternal rewards and punishments."

The statement is credible enough. Nothing is more

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natural than that terrors thoroughly impressed upon her by the Pietists in her childhood and by the Calvinists in her maturity should have chased her from creed to creed, and still have been slow to leave her. Ultimately, if we may trust Jean Jacques' account of her thoughts about religion, she got over her terrors by ceasing to believe in hell, like that more illustrious Pietist, Marie Huber. One may conjecture that she had read Marie Huber's books, and learnt from them, though without being carried to the point of desiring to imitate her conduct, or to try the experiment of a second abjuration. But this matter is wrapped in obscurity, in spite of M. Eugène Ritter's magazine articles [1] on the subject. Outwardly, at any rate, religion had little to do with the events of Madame de Warens' later years.

She went on, as we have seen, to Annecy, to live upon her pension. It was suggested by scandal-mongers that she drew that pension as the King of Sardinia's mistress; but that is almost certainly untrue. The probability is that she was thought worth pensioning as a notable convert whose conversion might attract other converts to Savoy. At any rate we find her keeping open house for converts whom the priests passed on to her; and it was thus that she made the acquaintance of Jean Jacques, who was then a hobbledehoy, a run-away apprentice from Geneva. "Go to Annecy," the priest, M. de Pontverre, said to him. "You will there find a charitable lady whom the benefactions of the king have disposed to redeem other souls from the errors from which she has herself escaped."

[1] In the *Revue Internationale*, 1889.

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What followed is so well known, and has been written about so often, that the story—always excepting the debateable points in it—need only be told here in the barest outline.

At first Madame de Warens intended to do nothing more for Rousseau than to give him a helping hand in his quest for true religion and honest work. To that end she despatched him, with pocket money provided by the Bishop of the diocese, to Turin, to live in a house devoted to the instruction of catechumens. He turned up again, and was placed in the Annecy seminary to be trained for the priesthood. Instead of studying for the priesthood he studied music, and was, very properly, required to leave the seminary. Still Madame de Warens did her best for him. Music lessons were provided for him. Once again he went away to earn his living, and once again he found his way back—this time to Chambéry whither Madame de Warens had removed. She got him employment in the public service as a land-surveyor. He went away a third time, and came back a third time; he gave up land-surveying; he rambled off on various other journeys, the purpose of which was not always very definite. But he regarded Madame de Warens' house as his head-quarters, and gradually established himself there as a fixture—now in Chambéry itself, and now in the country villa of *Les Charmettes*. Madame de Warens treated him as her adopted son, and introduced him to the best Chambéry society; socially she formed him—so far as he was ever formed at all—and intellectually she found him the means to educate himself; with the result that, when he definitely left her and went to Paris in 1743, he was fairly well equipped for the battle of life in that great city.

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Such is the portion of Jean Jacques' narrative which we know for certain to be true. It is borne out by the fact that, in his letters, she is always "Maman," and he is always "Petit"; and the picture is, in its way, idyllic. Unfortunately, Jean Jacques disturbs the idyll by the introduction of extraneous matter which, though poetically narrated, is, in its essence, devoid of all romance. He tells us that, at the time when he made her acquaintance, she was living as the mistress of her gardener, Claude Anet; and that, after a while, she invited him—and that he agreed—not to supersede Claude Anet, but to share her favours with him. Next we read that Claude Anet died, apparently from pleurisy, but really from the shock caused by the discovery of the privilege conferred upon his rival, and that, for a period, Rousseau reigned alone. A little later, however, he informs us that, on his return from a journey to Montpellier, undertaken for the benefit of his health, he found another favourite in possession—a certain Vintzinried, whom he holds up to ridicule as a "barber's assistant," and as a "flat-faced, flat-minded" person. And he goes on to assure us that, for a further period, there was what the French call *partage* between Vintzinried and himself, until his own definite departure for Paris put an end to this singular revival of the matriarchal system.

Told thus, without poetical embellishment, the story is obviously far from idyllic, and reflects anything but credit upon everyone concerned in it. If one were looking at it as an illustration of Pietistic morality—and M. de Warens has told us that the good Pietist Magny, who visited his wife at Annecy, reported that her heart was "turned to

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God"—one would be tempted to quote the more or less parallel cases of the Pietist Donadille, already mentioned, who made the inspiration of God a pretext for gallantry, and of the notorious lady Pietist of Geneva who ran about the streets declaring that a woman had no more right to deny a man the gratification of his affections than to refuse him food when he was hungry or water when he was thirsty. But other questions must come first. Is there a word of truth in the story? Is there not good reason to suppose that Jean Jacques invented it all for the diversion of his old age?

There is a book, to which Rousseau's biographers do not often refer, which has a certain bearing on the problem. This is the "Mémoires de Madame de Warens," published in 1786, and edited by the F. A. Doppet,[1] who, after the French Revolution, became a general of the French Republic. "What right has he (Jean Jacques)," Doppet demands indignantly in his preface, "to come and trouble her departed spirit and indict her before the world by attributing to her a kind of gallantry revolting at once to sense and sentiment?.... It is an odious accusation."

Now it may be admitted, at once, that the *Mémoires*

[1] Doppet began life as a cavalry officer, left the service to study medicine, and left medicine for literature. He became a leading member of the Jacobin Clubs, returned to the army, and in 1793 replaced Kellermann, as chief in command of the Army of the Alps. He made Lyon surrender. On the Pyrenean frontier he was less successful, and his command was taken away from him. He wrote an appalling number of books.

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edited by General Doppet have very little historical value. They are presented as the *ipsissima verba* of Madame de Warens, and they were obviously written out, just as they stand, by M. Doppet himself. They are so put together as to reply in detail to the charges contained in "Confessions"—which Madame Warens can never have seen, as she was dead when the book appeared; they abound in gross errors on incontrovertible matters of fact of which Madame de Warens cannot conceivably have been ignorant—errors either copied from the "Confessions" or adapted from Rousseau's novel, "La Nouvelle Héloise"; they are, in short, a very egregious "fake." But the mere fact that it seemed worth while to fake a book upon such lines proves that in Savoy, in 1786, Jean Jacques' story was by no means accepted as the voice of truth and soberness, and constitutes a challenge to the student to try to make out a case against Madame de Warens without reference to the "Confessions." And that is hard.

One notes, in the first place, that Madame de Warens was accepted in good society both at Annecy and at Chambéry;—in spite of the lax morals of the age, she certainly would not have been so received, if she had been known to be living in concubinage at once with her gardener and her adopted son. One also notes that such a secret would, in any case, have been hard to keep in a small provincial town, and that Jean Jacques himself was scarcely the young man to join in any conspiracy of silence about it. On the contrary, he would infallibly have gone about boasting of his conquest. The fact that he did not do so is by itself sufficient to arouse suspicion.

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In the second place one notes that, in the only other account of Madame de Warens furnished by a contemporary—that of M. de Conzié—already referred to—there is not the faintest hint that Madame de Warens ever overstepped the boundaries of circumspection. His testimony, in fact, points in the opposite direction; for he contrasts Madame de Warens with Rousseau's acknowledged mistress, Thérèse. "I have always," he writes, "condemned Jean Jacques, on whom she had bestowed the title of her adopted son, for having preferred the interests of Levasseur to those of a mother as respectable, in every sense of the word, as Levasseur was the contrary." This statement, which is absolutely unrelated to any controversy, but merely comes out of a letter written by a garrulous old gentleman, some time after Madame de Warens' death, is calculated to confirm suspicion.

Finally, one remarks that Madame de Warens' attitude towards her alleged lovers at a time when the alleged love-affairs are alleged to have ended is hard to reconcile with the theory that they had ever been her lovers. She, being a lady, would hardly, in such circumstances, have accepted Rousseau's charity, as he declares that she did, when offered to her through the hands of Thérèse; though Rousseau, who was a cad if ever there was one, may easily have composed the story without perceiving this objection to it. Nor is it any the more credible that, if Vintzinried had been Madame de Warens' lover, she would have arranged a marriage for him, as she unquestionably did, with a young lady living in her own town, and have written him the letter containing the following passage:—

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"Since it is your intention to establish yourself, I have nothing to say to you on the subject, except to pray to God that it may please Him to give you His holy blessing, and that everything may be for His glory and your salvation.

"Talk little if you can, and always conduct yourself in an irreproachable manner before God and men: that is the way to be always beloved and respected by everyone.

"Your very humble and very
"Obedient Servant."

Decidedly Madame de Warens' love affairs do not, as the phrase is, appear in the correspondence; and there is as little reference to them in Jean Jacques' letters as in hers. Reading those letters, in fact, side by side with the "Confessions," with careful comparison of dates, one is struck to find in them no single sentence indicating that the writer's relations with his benefactress were other than Platonic—not to say dutiful and subservient. At a time, for example, when according to the "Confessions" he had long been on a footing of privileged intimacy with her, we find him writing: "Permit me, once again, Madam, to take the liberty of recommending you to be careful of your health."

And this is only one instance typical of many; and the attitude is just the same in the letters which he wrote about Madame de Warens to other correspondents. The mere existence of the "Confessions," with its plausible abominations, forbids the thought that his reticence with them was due to delicacy of feeling; so that the conclusion seems inevitable that Madame de Warens is a calumniated woman, and Jean Jacques a liar, who, because he happened to have



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the artistic gifts of a story-teller, has succeeded in imposing an odious legend on the world.

Whether Madame de Warens was a calumniated woman or not, she certainly was, in her later years, an unhappy woman. She was not satisfied to live quietly on her pension—which indeed was not paid with anything like clock-work regularity—but, in spite of the warning of the silk-stocking factory, must needs dabble afresh in commercial speculations. At Chambéry, she originated various joint-stock companies for various purposes from soap-boiling to coal-mining. Their history closely resembles that of a good many modern "promotions," beginning with the obtaining of concessions, and proceeding to the peddling of shares, but never arriving at the regular payment of dividends. So creditors once more pressed for their dues, and as Madame de Warens grew older, she grew poorer. She accepted an annuity from a gentleman on whom she had no claims; she wrote begging letters which one has not the heart to quote; and in 1762, after a long illness, she died in destitution and obscurity.

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JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

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## CHAPTER XVII

ROUSSEAU—HIS FLIGHT FROM GENEVA—HIS LIFE WITH MADAME DE WARENS—HIS RETURN TO GENEVA AND TO PROTESTANTISM—HIS QUARREL WITH GENEVA—HIS RESIDENCE IN THE VAL DE TRAVERS

GENEVA is still very proud of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who certainly made more noise in the world than any previous or subsequent Genevan citizen. Whether the pride is justified by the facts is another question. The indictment against the philosopher is easy enough to draw. It runs as follows:—

Jean Jacques was probably a liar, and certainly a cad—a sentimental cad, which is the most exasperating kind; he kissed and told, and there is also a strong presumption that he boasted of kisses that he did not get. His self-respect was such that, while he sometimes refused pensions with grumpy indignation, he saw no harm in allowing ladies of fashion to support him while he lived in concubinage with a washerwoman's daughter. When acting in the capacity of a private tutor, he practised the petty dishonesties of the servants' hall, and stole his employer's wine to guzzle in his bedroom. He quarrelled with, and disgusted, almost all his friends and benefactors, and allowed his head to be so turned by his success that Edmund Burke who, having no quarrel with him, was able to sum him up impartially, declared that he had "no principle either to influence his

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heart or guide his understanding but vanity." As a man, in short, he may be summed up as an inconsistent Diogenes playing to the gallery with a zest that almost deceived himself, but never quite able to shake off the traditions of the flunkey, or the regret that he had not been cast for the *rôle* of a Lothario.

There obviously is nothing for Geneva to be very proud of here; nor can it be confidently said that the contemptible character of the man was redeemed by the wisdom of the philosopher. Jean Jacques, in truth, was not a philosopher, but a sentimentalist with a dash of the prig. The political science of the *Contrat Social* is sentimentalism grafted upon ignorance of history; the educational teaching of *Emile* is sentimentalism grafted upon ignorance of boys—such ignorance as might have been expected from the man who sent his children—or rather his mistress' children, who may also have been his [1]—to the foundling hospital. Presented without sentimental embellishment, his views on both these subjects would have attracted very little attention. But because he was a sentimentalist, and also a great artist in words, whose writings brought tears to the eyes of sympathetic readers, he drew the attention of Europe to his theories and to his personality. He has imposed himself, and Geneva boasts of him. Let us fix his precise position in Geneva.

The first member of the family to settle in Geneva was one Didier Rousseau, who came from Paris in 1549—about

[1] It has been suggested by a writer in the *Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et Curieux* that it was because he had his doubts as to the paternity of the babies that he disposed of them in this barbarous manner.

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the same time as de Bèze, Estienne, Hotman, and the father of Isaac Casaubon. He was a religious refugee who went into business as a wine-merchant, and prospered; he married a Mademoiselle Miège—a young woman of humble station, whose brothers were bakers, cobblers, stable-boys, and the like. From him were descended Jean Rousseau, the tanner, Jean Rousseau, the watchmaker, David Rousseau, who was Jean Jacques' grandfather, and Isaac Rousseau, who was Jean Jacques' father. Isaac Rousseau was sometimes a watch-maker, and sometimes a dancing-master. He married Suzanne Bernard, who bore him two sons, and died in giving birth to Jean Jacques.

From sources other than the "Confessions" we gather that the family, on both sides, had its fair share of *mauvais sujets*. Jean Jacques' maternal grandfather, Jacques Bernard, was hailed before the Consistory, four several times, for the crime of "paillardise." One of his aunts, Theodora Rousseau, gave birth to a child about a week after her marriage, and she and her husband were required by the same body to kneel in a public place and beg the pardon of the community for "scandalous anticipation of their wedding day." Another aunt, Suzanne Rousseau, was reprimanded for card-playing, while his mother was solemnly rebuked for compromising herself by receiving visits from a married man. As for his father, he was a good-natured ne'er-do-well, who squandered his wife's dowry, and a brawler who went into exile at Nyon to avoid a sentence of imprisonment passed on him for assaulting a soldier who had declined his invitation to a duel on the ground that soldiers could not be expected to fight with dancing-masters.

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This was the right sort of heredity for the sentimentalist who was to begin life as a runaway apprentice. His master, Abel Ducommun, an engraver, was a stern disciplinarian who beat him for stealing apples, for absenting himself without leave, and for other reasons. So, just as Isaac Rousseau had run away from Geneva to escape imprisonment, Jean Jacques ran away from Geneva to escape a thrashing. He knocked at the door of M. de Pontverre, curé of Confignon, who was looking out for converts. M. de Pontverre persuaded him to become a Roman Catholic by giving him a good dinner, and passed him on to Madame de Warens, who, in her turn, despatched him to the Hospice of Catechumens at Turin, to receive more detailed instruction in the faith which he had adopted under the pressure of hunger. According to his own story, his behaviour at Turin was that of a disgusting young blackguard; but the particulars are too unpleasant to be recited here, though one is, on the whole, less disgusted with the offence itself than with the fact that the philosopher remembered and recorded all the circumstances of it in his old age.

The period which follows is the period already dealt with in the chapter relating the fortunes and misfortunes of Madame de Warens. One need not go over that ground again, beyond noting that it was then and thus that Jean Jacques acquired his culture and made his first useful acquaintances. The most picturesque episode of the period was the walking tour which he undertook when, on his return to Annecy after a journey, he found that his benefactress had gone away without leaving an address. He set out with the maid-of-all work, who had also been deserted, and accompanied

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her all the way to Fribourg, without, as he is careful to assure us, making love to her. From Fribourg he walked to Lausanne where he made an unsuccessful attempt to establish himself as a music master, and thence to Neuchâtel where he actually got some pupils. At Neuchâtel he made the acquaintance of an impostor who professed to be an Archimandrite commissioned to collect funds for the restoration of the Holy Sepulchre. The impostor engaged him as his secretary, and took him first to Berne, and then to Soleure. At Soleure the fraud was exposed, but Rousseau found a friend in the French ambassador, who assisted him to go to Paris. He went there, still on foot, but, finding no brilliant career awaiting him, set out again and made his way back to Madame de Warens, who had by this time established herself at Chambéry.

His story of his sojourn at Chambéry, and at the country house, Les Charmettes, is familiar to every reader of the "Confessions." Save in the matter of his relations to his benefactress—a branch of the subject to which we need not return—the story is no doubt approximately true. It is a story which, though presented in beautiful language, and with consummate art, reflects no particular credit on Jean Jacques. On his own showing, he, a vigorous young man, quite capable of earning his own living, was sponging upon a good-natured elderly lady of small means; and when he was absent from the home she made for him, he seldom failed to be guilty of some act of blackguardism. His desertion of a comrade who was seized with a fit in the streets of Lyon is one example; his secret guzzling of an employer's wine is a second; and there are others.

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We need not dwell upon them, however. Discreditable incidents are too numerous in Jean Jacques' career for many of them to be narrated in detail in so short a sketch; and we may hasten on to the occasion on which he revisited Geneva in the character of a celebrity. He left the City, as we have seen, a runaway apprentice, in 1728; he returned, a man of letters who had made his reputation, though not his fortune, in 1754.

Much had happened in the meantime. Madame de Warens had taught him, so far as he was teachable, the manners and tone of good society. He had picked up Thérèse Levasseur, the washerwoman's daughter, and lived with her and the washerwoman under the patronage of Madame d'Epinay. His compositions had succeeded at the opera; he had won a prize offered by the Academy of Dijon by an essay denouncing the arts and sciences as proofs and causes of corruption. He imposed himself upon Geneva as a great man, and was received with every mark of consideration, and showed his gratitude for the compliments showered upon him by promptly changing his religion. His own narrative shows how purely sentimental was his attitude towards the antagonistic creeds of Protestants and Roman Catholics.

"Fêted and made much of in every class of society, I abandoned myself to patriotic zeal, and feeling ashamed of my exclusion from the rights of citizenship by my profession of a creed different from that of my forefathers, I resolved to resume their forms of belief. My opinion was that, as the Gospel was the same for all Christians, and as all dogmas were fundamentally identical—except when they attempted to explain the unintelligible—it was the business of the ruling

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power in each country alone to fix the form of worship and this unintelligible dogma, and the duty of all the citizens to accept the dogma and adopt the prescribed form of worship.... Judging that, for a reasonable man, there is only one kind of Christianity, I also judged that the form and the discipline were matters for the law to settle. From this sensible and pacific principle, which has brought me so much cruel persecution, it followed that, as I wanted to be a citizen, it was my duty to become a Protestant.... I made up my mind to it; I even submitted myself to the instructions of the pastor of the parish."

This is decidedly more sentimental than dignified; and in practice—more particularly at the hours at which the philosopher received spiritual instruction from the pastor of the parish—it must have involved a fair measure of deliberate dishonesty. One is not surprised to learn that, in the circumstances, he shrank from the ordeal of a public recantation of his errors before the Consistory, and begged leave to be examined privately by a commission. His request was granted on the ground that his conduct had always been "pure and irreproachable,"—which seems a curious view for the Genevan clergy to take of the conduct of a man who was notoriously and openly living with a mistress,—and he was duly admitted to the Holy Communion and the rights of citizenship.

These formalities completed, Jean Jacques tells us that he spent the rest of his visit in amusing himself. The fact that he and Thérèse used to go boating on the lake with the elder de Luc and his daughter-in-law is one indication among many of the change which had come over the tone

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of the Puritan City since Calvin's time. Rousseau, at any rate, was so gratified with his treatment that he thought seriously of making Geneva his home. He says that his principal reason for not doing so was the arrival of Voltaire, and his fear that that philosopher would corrupt the simple morals of the Republic. His own morals, however, were by no means such that a little additional corruption need have made much difference to him; and the reason was probably an after-thought that occurred to him when he and Voltaire had quarrelled. That is a matter, however, into which we need not enter; nor need we speculate whether Jean Jacques would have been happier as a sober Genevan citizen than he was as an irresponsible wanderer over the face of the earth. The presumption is strong that, being a weak man of unconventional views and quarrelsome disposition, he would very soon have made Geneva too hot to hold him. But the experiment was not tried; and Rousseau's subsequent relations with the Republic, important as they were, were not those of a resident but of a correspondent.

We will skip a period, therefore, and pick up the thread of his story at the time when the philosopher fled to Switzerland to escape from persecution.

Eight years had passed, and things had happened. The philosopher had lived in retirement, copying music for a living, had had some sentimental experiences, and had written his famous sentimental novel. The soil of Europe had been watered by the tears shed by the readers of *La Nouvelle Hélöise*. Jean Jacques had set the fashion of that wasteful voluptuous emotionalism which was to echo through many literatures in such works as "The Sorrows of Werther,"

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"Paul et Virginie," "The Man of Feeling," "I promessi Sposi," and "Atala." He had himself so far become the fashion that the Maréchale de Luxembourg used to invite him to her boudoir to read his own compositions aloud to her. But the blow fell with the publication of *Emile* and the *Contrat Social* in 1762.

Both books were considered reprehensible; but the former bore the brunt of the attack. Dr. Gervaise reported to the Sorbonne "that a book called *Emile ou de l'Education* was circulating everywhere, that its author was unhappily only too well known as a past master in the arts of corruption and error, and that his work, which was equally opposed to sound faith and good morals was being read with an avidity which could not but do harm." The Parliament of Paris decided that the book must be burnt and its author arrested, though it seems to have been the intention of the authorities to give him the chance of running away if he preferred. He did prefer, and drove off in an open carriage lent to him for the purpose by the Maréchal de Luxembourg. The officers sent to seize him actually passed him in the street, but merely bowed to him as he rattled by, and proceeded to the house which he had quitted and drew up a *procès verbal* to the effect that he was not to be found there.

He drove to Yverdon where he had "the pure and lively joy of being pressed in the arms of the respectable Roguin," but the news which he heard did not encourage him to make a long stay there. Both his books had been burnt at Geneva on the ground that they were "temerarious, scandalous, impious, and liable to destroy the Christian religion and all forms of government," and he was to be arrested if

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ever he set foot in Genevan territory. Berne was also making preparations to punish him, so that it was necessary that he should at once seek a fresh asylum. As usual, a lady who admired his genius came to his assistance. Madame Boy de la Tour offered to lend him a furnished house at Môtiers, in the Val de Travers, in the territory of Neuchâtel, which then belonged to the King of Prussia, for whom it was governed by Lord Keith. Frederick the Great was too magnanimous to bear malice because the philosopher had attacked him in his writings, and Governor Keith promised his protection. So Rousseau packed his things and went to Môtiers, where Thérèse joined him in due course.

The story of the three years which he spent at Môtiers has all the picturesqueness which a series of sharp contrasts can supply. He was a hunted man to whom few governments were willing to accord a tranquil resting-place; but he was also the most popular man in Europe in circles which were swayed by sentiment. Warrants were out for his arrest in at least three countries; but in each of these three countries his works were received as a new Gospel by a large and influential section of society. Ostensibly he had fled to the mountains to hide himself from the world; as a fact he brought the world into touch with his mountains; becoming as it were a Sentimental Pope whom sentimental pilgrims from all nations thought it necessary to turn aside from the grand tour to visit. Moreover, if he did not deliberately play to the gallery, and lay himself out to court *réclame*, at least he behaved as though *réclame* were the thing that he chiefly desired. He learnt the art of making

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boot-laces, made them ostentatiously at the door of his own châlet, and carried the implements of the trade with him, so that he might go on making them, whenever he visited a neighbour. He also adopted the costume of an Armenian, and wore it when he went botanising in the vicinity. It has been suggested, it is true, that he merely adopted it because he was suffering from a malady which made the wearing of breeches inconvenient; but this argument does not carry conviction. The same object might have been achieved by other means, and one does not readily picture a philosopher indifferent to *réclame* putting forward the state of his health as an excuse for rambling on the hill sides in such extraordinary attire.

Whether in spite of, or because of, these eccentricities, Jean Jacques was at first well-received at Môtiers. No difficulty was placed in the way of his admission to the Holy Communion—a privilege to which he appears to have clung as to a last link connecting him with organised and respectable society; and the best families of the district called upon him, and offered him hospitality without raising any awkward questions as to his relations with Thérèse. Colonel Abraham de Pury invited people of the best sets to meet him at Mon-Lesi; M. Depeyrou entertained him in the largest house in Neuchâtel; Madame Boy de la Tour went shopping for him at Lyon, whence she sent him, among other things, his Armenian garments and a box of pills.

Visitors from a distance, too, were very numerous: the de Lucs; Beauchâteau, the watch-maker; the Rev. Messrs. Roustan and Mouchon, ministers of religion at Geneva; Professor Hess of Zurich; James Boswell; many senti-

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mental women, and an even greater number of sentimental military men. They were, most of them, Jean Jacques declares, people who had no interest whatever in literature, and had never read any of his books, and were only actuated by curiosity, and the desire to boast, when they got home, that they had made the acquaintance of an illustrious man. He professes to have found their attentions an intolerable nuisance, but the balance of the evidence indicates that, in the main, he thoroughly enjoyed their flattery, regarding it as a proper tribute to his importance. To establish that point it is only necessary to contrast the scornful references to the visitors in the *Confessions* with the friendly tone of the letters in which Jean Jacques invited them to come and see him. In one case—that of M. d'Ivernois of Geneva—that contrast is so violent that it seems worth while to bring it into clear relief by means of the convenient device of parallel columns.

*From the "Confessions."*

This M. d'Ivernois of Geneva passed through Môtiers twice a year for the purpose of seeing me; stayed with me, several days running, from morning till night; joined me in my walks, brought me all sorts of little presents, insinuated himself into my confidence, and meddled with my business in spite of the fact that we had no community of ideas, tastes, sentiments, or acquaintances. I

*From letters to M. d'Ivernois.*

My dear Sir, if I cannot have the pleasure of following you, at any rate I await with anxiety the pleasure of embracing you. It would be one good thing the more in my life, if I could enjoy that pleasure more frequently.

I am intending to go and sleep at Goumoins, and, on the following day, at Morges. I am letting you know my plans a little in detail, in order that, if you care to join me at Morges,

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do not believe he had ever read a book through in his life, or that he had the faintest notion what my books were about. When I began botanising he attended me in my walks, without either of us having a word to say to the other. He even had the audacity to spend three whole days with me in an inn at Goumoins, though I tried to drive him away by boring him, and by shewing him how much I was myself bored by his society.

you may know when to find me there.... I shall be delighted to see both you and our friends....

It seems from your activity that you cannot be concerning yourself with anyone but me. Your kind attentions may be as useful to me as your friendship is precious.... I know no one but you whom I can trust.

The differences between the two points of view are too striking to require explanatory comment; but we may take it that the letters are the true guide, and that Jean Jacques did really derive pleasure from the compliments of that vulgar herd which he pretended to despise, and even put himself in the way of obtaining this gratification of his vanity.

It was, however, not only by visitors, but also by correspondents that homage was paid to him. This might reasonably have been regarded as a grievance, as he was a poor man and it was the rule of those days that the recipient of a communication had to pay the postage. Rousseau, however, seems to have taken in all the letters that came to him, and to have duly read and answered them; and they must have formed a marvellous collection—much such a collection, in fact, as would be found in the offices of those weekly papers which devote a portion of their space to

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"Answers to Correspondents" on questions of ethics and etiquette. All kinds of people sought Jean Jacques' advice on all kinds of sentimental questions. Many of his replies are preserved in the manuscript department of the public library of Neuchâtel; and M. Berthoud,[1] who has examined them, gives a graphic summary of their contents, which must be quoted:—

"A very young man, who has just married, consults him as to the duties of a husband and a father; another wants to know what familiarities he may permit himself with his mistress without ceasing to be virtuous; an abbé of noble family, and inclinations towards scepticism, does not know how to reconcile his family pride, his doubts, and his career, and appeals to Rousseau to extricate him from his embarrassment. An officer whom Jean Jacques' books have disgusted with the trade of war wishes to turn author, and asks for an opinion on his pastoral poems. A husband begs him to explain to his wife, who loves him too much for his peace of mind, that she must resign herself to a separation necessitated by the claims of his business. A prodigal son demands his good offices in obtaining his father's forgiveness; a dancing-master reproaches him for having spoken too lightly of this serious art."

And so forth. No account of Jean Jacques' residence in the Val de Travers is complete unless we take note of this prodigious correspondence, and we picture him sitting at the receipt of confidences, and advising the sentimentalists

[1] *J. J. Rousseau au Val de Travers.* By Fritz Berthoud. Paris 1881.

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of all nations how to regulate the details of their daily lives.

For the rest, he engaged in energetic walking tours, including an ascent of the Chasseron, [1] above Yverdon, with his friends, who ridiculed the idea that he really suffered fron the infirmities described in so much detail in the *Confessions*. Colonel Abraham de Pury declared that his complaints of insomnia were all nonsense—seeing that he kept others awake by snoring; and M. d'Escherny announced that he could observe no symptoms of any malady requiring him to wear the flowing robes provided by the Armenian tailor.

It should be added, however, that, at the very time when Jean Jacques was thus enjoying himself at Môtiers, Madame de Warens was dying, in misery and destitution, at Chambéry. He tells us that he neglected to write to her because he did not wish to trouble her with the recital of his misfortunes. It is another instance of the want of candour which—no less than the pretence of candour where reticence would have been preferable—distinguishes the *Confessions*. Jean Jacques, at this period of his life, had no sorrows worthy to be compared with those of the unhappy woman who had been his greatest benefactress.

The serene interlude was to end, however, in turbulence and tribulation; and the causes which brought it to a stormy and melancholy close are still, to a certain extent, wrapped in mystery. There is a good deal to be said for the crude

[1] 5,282 ft. high—a frequent excursion from Yverdon, whence it is approached by mountain railway to Sainte Croix.



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and brutal theory that M. Montmollin, pastor of Môtiers, taking offence because he was not invited to become a shareholder in a company projected for the purpose of publishing a uniform revised edition of the philosopher's works, resolved to avenge himself by preaching the philosopher out of his parish—just as, more than a couple of centuries earlier, Pastor Farel had preached the nuns of the Sainte Claire Convent out of Geneva. But the actual verifiable facts are these.

Jean Jacques, amazed at the burning of *Emile* and the *Contrat Social* at Geneva, had kept quiet for a season, hoping that the force of public opinion would compel the magistrates to redress the wrong. As his hopes were disappointed, he resigned his citizenship, and launched a thunderbolt—his *Lettres écrites de la Montagne*. This book, in which were expressed many sentiments at variance with orthodox Christianity, caused a great sensation, and gave great offence. It did not, at first, stir any particular hostility in the Val de Travers; but at last, after a delay that fairly exposed him to criticism, Pastor Montmollin took the matter up. It has been suggested that he would never have taken it up at all if he had not, in the meantime, made an unsuccessful application for shares in the company above referred to; but it is at least as reasonable to suppose that he was a stupid man, not much given to reading, and that the idea that his eccentric parishioner had written a dangerous book, only filtered into his mind by slow degrees when he learnt that the book had been burnt by eminent ecclesiastics at important theological seats of learning.

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However that may be, when M. Montmollin did take the matter up he took it up with energy, requesting Rousseau to absent himself from celebrations of the Holy Communion, and trying to get the request endorsed by a resolution of the local Consistory. Jean Jacques showed fight, and a majority of the Consistory backed him. Then the area of the controversy extended. Everyone of importance in Neuchâtel and the neighbourhood took a hand in it; even Frederick the Great contributed an imperious letter. It was the old, old battle as to the respective prerogatives of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities; and people took sides according to their views upon this abstract question, Rousseau himself becoming a mere pawn or counter in the game. On the one side the magistrates assured him of their protection; on the other side the pastor denounced him from the pulpit. And the pastor got the best of it. His eloquent sermons roused the populace to the point of breaking the philosopher's windows; and the philosopher, finding his windows broken, beat a precipitate retreat.

That is the usual version of the story, and it is, no doubt, in the mean correct. There is an alternative version, however, of the final episode, which represents the window-breaking as a bit of comedy organised by Thérèse for purposes of her own. She was bored at Môtiers; she thought it was time to move somewhere else; she could not influence her philosopher by argument, so she decided to bring stronger pressure to bear. She felt sure that he would go if his windows were broken, so she persuaded the small children of the village to break them.

Such was the story which M. Gaberel, the historian,

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heard from an "oldest inhabitant," who had been a child at the time of the outrage.

"Ah, we were naughty children," says this aged dame, "to tease the good M. Rousseau. He was said to be a little cracked; he always had the idea that his enemies were after him, and the boys and girls used to frighten him by hiding behind the trees, and calling out to him, 'Be careful, M. Rousseau, they're coming to take you to-morrow!' As for the affair of the stones, it was Thérèse who made us carry them up into the gallery in our aprons, and it was we who threw two or three stones at the windows. How we laughed the next day when we saw the magistrate measuring the big stones in the gallery, under the belief that the windows had been broken by them—as if stones the size of your fist could pass through holes the size of walnuts. And M. Rousseau looked so scared that we nearly died with laughing."

It is not the most probable story that one has ever heard; but none of the stories between which one has to choose are very probable. What is certain is that the attitude of the philosopher throughout the disturbances was by no means characterised by philosophic calm. Among his unpublished writings are certain jottings on odd scraps of paper still preserved, in which he expressed his emotions in language that was not only unphilosophical, but even undignified. "Send along your idiotic priests with their excommunications," he wrote. "I'll undertake to ram it down their throats and stop their cackle for a long time." And he wrote a good deal more to the same purpose; though this suffices for an example.

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With the flight from Môtiers, Jean Jacques' connection with Geneva ends. We need not follow him to Bienne, to Strasburg, to England, to Trye, to Ermenonville; nor need we go very deeply into the vexed question whether he owed his philosophy—such as it was—to Geneva, to Savoy, or to France. Geneva may claim it—for what it is worth; for the most salient propositions of the *Contrat Social* are clearly the results of the examination by a loose thinker of the political institutions of a minute Republic. In the case of Geneva those propositions were only historically untrue; in the case of larger countries they were so obviously inadequate that it would never have occurred to anyone who only knew the larger countries to formulate them. But it is impossible to treat seriously the philosophy of a writer who began one treatise with the statement that "man is born free and everywhere in chains," and another with the statement that "everything is good when it issues from the hands of the Creator, but degenerates in the hands of men." To make such statements is to assume as postulates propositions which, when examined, turn out to be only hasty and inaccurate generalisations from imperfectly observed phenomena; and that is not philosophy in any proper sense of the word.

In any case, however, the discussion is rather futile, seeing that it is not as a philosopher, but as a Sentimentalist that Jean Jacques Rousseau counts. He was of those with whom literary composition is primarily, if not solely, an occasion for indulging in an emotional debauch, and shedding the voluptuous tears of sensibility. He was the greatest of them—greater than Richardson who came before him, and

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greater than Bernardin de Saint Pierre who came after him. If he has ceased to move his readers, and—save for the scandalous earlier books of the *Confessions*—has ceased even to be read, while writers who made less stir in their life-time are still living forces long after their death, one can only say that, in this, he shares the common fate of sentimentalists.

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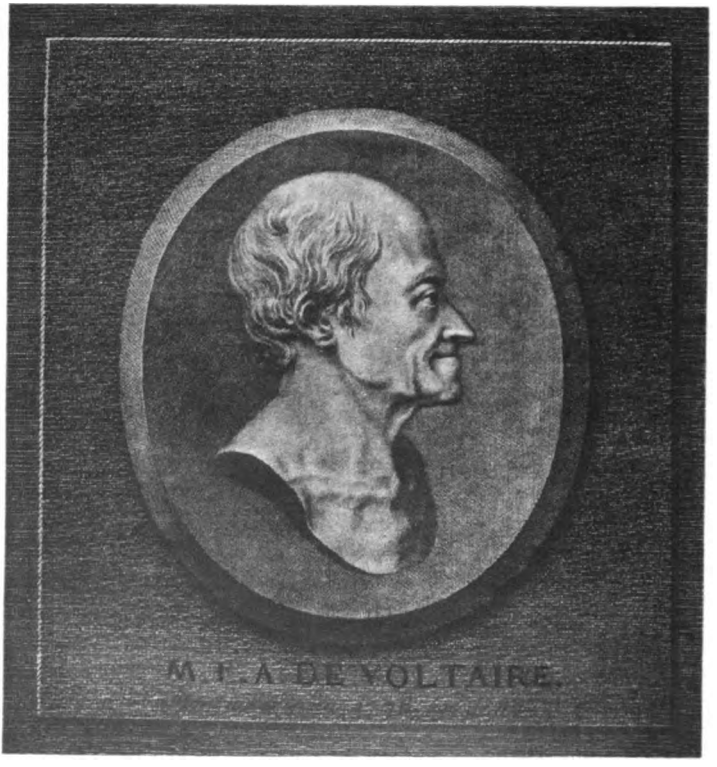


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# CHAPTER [illegible]

VOLTAIRE [illegible] HIS CHA[illegible]
[illegible] HIPPY [illegible]
[illegible] TIES AT [illegible]

We pass from [illegible] to Voltaire—from the [illegible] of [illegible] to the A[illegible] of [illegible].

[illegible] man's estimate of Voltaire might probably [illegible] in the [illegible] statement [illegible] "[illegible] clever by half." [illegible] not, of [illegible] presentation [illegible] and [illegible] pro[illegible]opher, who [illegible] entered [illegible] remembered [illegible] of the arts, the [illegible] the poor, and the [illegible] of the oppressed, but it [illegible] mere as a phrase can [illegible] to relief the [illegible] of his [illegible] which must have most vividly [illegible] acquaintances who saw a great deal of him with the [illegible] being quite admitted to his confidence [illegible] it, in [illegible] an intellectual [illegible] of persons [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] he [illegible] of his [illegible] by [illegible] a press [illegible] contracted [illegible] [illegible] himself castigated [illegible]

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### VOLTAIRE—HIS QUARRELS WITH THE CLERGY—HIS CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE THEATRE—HIS PHILANTHROPY—THE MANNER OF HIS LIFE AT FERNEY

We pass from Rousseau to Voltaire—from the Pope of sentimentalism to the Apostle of pure reason.

The average man's estimate of Voltaire might probably be best summarised in the vulgar statement that he was "too clever by half." It would not, of course, be an exhaustive presentation of the genius and characteristics of the philosopher, who is equally entitled to be introduced and remembered as the patron of the arts, the benefactor of the poor, and the champion of the oppressed; but it does go as near as a phrase can towards bringing into relief the feature of his personality which must have most vividly impressed acquaintances who saw a great deal of him without ever being quite admitted to his confidence—his delight, to wit, in executing an intellectual war-dance to the derision of persons of meaner intelligence, and with results not infrequently disconcerting to his own peace and comfort.

Because he was clever, Voltaire made a fortune—not by the sale of his books, but by participating in the speculations of a presumably fraudulent army contractor. By being too clever by half he got himself castigated by order of

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the Chevalier de Rohan, who stood by to direct the stripes which his hired ruffians administered. It was also because he was too clever by half that he forfeited the friendship and protection of Frederick the Great, and we shall find abundant evidence that his constant attempts to prove himself too clever for the Genevans embittered his relations with that hospitable and unsophisticated people.

He was sixty years of age when he settled on the shores of the Lake, where he was to remain for another four and twenty years; and he did not go there for his pleasure. He would have preferred to live in Paris, but was afraid of being locked up in the Bastille. As the great majority of the men of letters of the reign of Louis XV were, at one time or another, locked up in the Bastille, his fears were probably well founded. Moreover, notes of warning had reached his ears. "I dare not ask you to dinner," a relative said to him, "because you are in bad odour at Court." So he betook himself to Geneva, as so many Frenchmen, illustrious and otherwise, had done before, and acquired various properties,—at Prangins, at Lausanne, at Saint Jean (near Geneva) at Ferney, at Tournay, and elsewhere.

He was welcomed cordially. Dr. Tronchin, [1] the eminent

[1] A fashionable physician of European fame. He was supposed to be a specialist for the "vapours"—which malady he treated with air and exercise in preference to drugs. At Versailles he astonished the ladies of the Court by ordering the windows to be opened. He anticipated Jean Jacques in recommending all mothers to nurse their own children. The Tronchin family was of French origin, but had been in Geneva since the Reformation. The theologians of the family were only less famous than the doctor.

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physician, co-operated in the legal fictions necessary to enable him to become a land-owner in the Republic. Cramer, the publisher, made a proposal for the issue of a complete and authorised edition of his works. All the best people called. "It is very pleasant," he was able to write, "to live in a country where rulers borrow your carriage to come to dinner with you." Yet his desire to "score off" the ministers of religion, who no doubt struck him as pretentious persons of sluggish intellect, soon set him at loggerheads with his hosts.

The first trouble arose in connection with the article on Geneva published in the Encyclopædia, edited by Diderot and d'Alembert. It was in the course of a short visit to Voltaire that d'Alembert gathered the materials for that article. He was encouraged, and afforded every facility for pursuing his researches, alike by the ministers and by the magistrates. "He is the curiosity of the Town," a contemporary letter-writer declared, "and it is quite the fashion to go and call on him." In particular he was entertained by the clergy, and talked theology with them after dinner. Their views were broad—thanks to the influence of that eminent theologian, Turretini; in all probability their views were broader after dinner than at any earlier period of the day. At all events the encyclopædist drew them out to his satisfaction, with the result that, when his article appeared, and the divines made haste to read it, it was found that their theological position was expounded in the following startling paragraph:—

"There is less complaint of the advance of infidelity at Geneva than elsewhere; but that is not surprising. Religion

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there—unless it be among the common people—is reduced to the worship of one God; a certain respect for Jesus Christ and the Scriptures is perhaps the only thing that distinguishes the Christianity of Geneva from pure Deism."

This in the City of Calvin. It was as though the encyclopædist had stirred a hornets' nest. To change the metaphor, the fat was in the fire, and the fire blazed up at once. The Consistory met and appointed a Commission "to consider what were the best steps to take in the matter." The Commission deputed Dr. Tronchin to try and obtain an apology and retractation from the offending author; and Dr. Tronchin applied to Voltaire for help. Seeing that Voltaire had already written to d'Alembert congratulating him on his success in arousing the "murmurs of the synagogue," this was not a very hopeful step. Voltaire, in fact, had unquestionably inspired the statements which he was now asked to invite his collaborator to withdraw. He temporised, enjoyed the fun, and tampered with the truth, to keep it up. He protested that he knew nothing about the article—that he wanted nothing but a quiet life, for himself and for everybody else, including "Trinitarians, Unitarians, Quakers, Moravians, Turks, Jews, and Chinamen." He also, in the friendliest manner, warned his correspondent that, if d'Alembert were pressed too hard, he might, instead of apologising, prove that the things which he had said were true:—

"Retractation," he wrote, "was all very well for Saint Augustine; but it will not do for him. I know his character. If your complaints get too loud, he will quote a certain catechism by your Professor of Theology, wherein it is said that revelation is 'a thing of some utility', and wherein there is

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no single word about the holy, adorable, and indivisible Trinity. When he establishes that he has not disclosed a secret, but has only publicly taken cognizance of an opinion publicly expressed, you will be slightly embarrassed."

This was not very encouraging. It would have seemed still less encouraging if it had been known that Voltaire was, at the same time, corresponding with d'Alembert, undertaking to "lead the ministers a pretty dance", and promising that they should be made to "drink their cup to the dregs." Dr. Tronchin, however, was a determined man, and continued to pursue his purpose with true Genevan obstinacy. He made a direct application for the apology to d'Alembert himself; but only got an evasive answer. "There is no doubt," he reported, "that M. d'Alembert is giving us a great deal of trouble which he would have spared us if he could have been brought to believe that his obligations to humanity were greater than his obligations to history." Then, baffled in this direction, he opened his heart to Diderot; but met with no better success. Diderot merely expressed polite regret that he had no authority to interfere with d'Alembert's contributions to the Encyclopædia. Finally, when the game seemed lost, Dr. Tronchin played his trump card, and laid the matter before the French ambassador.

Voltaire, hearing of his intention, told him bluntly that he would be a fool for his pains; but this time Voltaire was wrong. The French government took the matter up, and ordered the publication of the Encyclopædia to be suspended. So that, in the end, it was—very properly—the philosophers who got the worst of it in the rough-

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and-tumble which, in defiance of the laws of hospitality, they had provoked with the divines.

Another bone of contention was found in Voltaire's addiction to the theatre.

He seems to have been more passionately devoted to the theatre than any other philosopher who ever lived. It was not enough for him to go to the play; he must also take part in it, and direct it. It was not enough for him to meet actors in their professional capacity; he also wanted to make companions of them, to introduce them to the ladies of his family, to have them staying in his house. His tastes were shared by the Cramers, and other members of the "advanced" set at Geneva; but the divines, in spite of their broad views on matters of dogmatic theology, still held narrow views on the subject of the drama. Dramatic performances, whether public or private, were not allowed upon Genevan soil; while performances given close to the frontier, on the territory of Savoy or France, caused the ministers many searchings of heart.

There had been such performances shortly before Voltaire's arrival—in 1751—at Carouge and Châtelaine, and the Consistory had passed a resolution on the subject. It had decided to exhort the members of the Council to keep their wives away from the entertainments, and to exhort the Professors to warn the students—and more particularly the candidates for holy orders—not to attend them. Afterwards, hearing that the daughters of some of the pastors had visited the theatre in defiance of their admonitions, they had passed a further resolution to the effect that this state of things gave ground for reflection—*qu'il y'a lieu d'y réfléchir.*

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Such was the public opinion which Voltaire braved; and his first attempt to brave it was not very successful. Soon after his arrival he arranged a *salle de spectacle* inside the city walls, and organised a performance of *L'Orphelin de la Chine*. The Consistory growled out a hostile resolution, and he dropped the enterprise, but proceeded to educate opinion from a safe distance. That is to say, he set up his theatre at Lausanne, and wrote insinuating letters about its management to his friends among the Genevan pastors. We have Gibbon's testimony to the fact that this theatre "refined in a visible degree the manners of Lausanne;" and we have a letter in which Voltaire gives the pastor, Vernes, sound reasons for coming to witness the performances.

"In your quality of minister of the Gospel," he writes, "you might very well be present at the rendering of a piece taken from the Gospel itself, and hear the word of God from the mouth of the Marquise de Gentil, Madame d'Aubonne, and Madame d'Hermenches, who are as worthy women as the three Magdalens, and more respectable." And he adds: "At the first representation we had all the ministers of the Holy Gospel in the Town, and all the candidates for Holy Orders."

It was a pretty good beginning; but there was still to be trouble and controversy before the educational process was completed. In this field, as in the field of theology, d'Alembert with his Encyclopædia article, stirred Camerina. He said that it was a pity that comedy should be neglected in such a centre of civilisation, but added that the thing that the Genevans dreaded was not the demoralising influence of plays, but the dissolute behaviour of players. And

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he suggested that this difficulty might be got over by means of stringent regulations as to the conduct of comedians. By this means he said, Geneva might have good morals and good theatres both, and derive as much advantage from the one as from the other.

For the moment it looked as though this ingeniously ironical proposal would escape attention; the theologians being too excited about their impugned orthodoxy to notice anything else. Rousseau, however, saw it, and decided to reply to it, and in due course launched his famous *Lettres sur les Spectacles*. Being himself a dramatic author of some note, he was not an ideal champion of the cause which he represented; but in the stir caused by his intervention no one seems to have thought of that. His rhetoric made just as lively an impression as though his actions had always been in keeping with it. The Genevans took sides; and Voltaire—as though for the express purpose of giving them something tangible to fight about—established a theatre close to their gates, outside the jurisdiction of their magistrates, at Tournay.

The battle raged furiously. To this period of Voltaire's sojourn belong most of his bitter sarcastic sayings about Geneva: his reference to "the little Church of Calvin which makes virtue consist in usury and asceticism," and his famous epigram containing the famous lines:

On haït le bal, on haït la comédie;
Pour tout plaisir Genève psalmodie
Du bon David des antiques concerts,
Croyant que Dieu se plait aux mauvais vers.

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Abuse of Jean Jacques also abounds in his letters at this period. Jean Jacques is a "blackguard;" Jean Jacques is in league with two rascally Calvinist priests, and "has the insolence" to say this, that, and the other thing; Jean Jacques is "valet to Diogenes" who "has played in vain the part of an addle-pated idiot;" if Jean Jacques comes to Ferney, he shall be stuffed into a barrel, and presumably rolled down-hill—which proves, even if it proves nothing else, that, when philosophers fall out, they are apt to wrangle in much the same language as less intellectual people.

Yet on the whole Voltaire was steadily winning the victory. The Council, it is true, forbade the citizens to attend his theatre; but little attention was paid to the prohibition, and among those who disregarded it were included many of the Councillors themselves. Members of the best Genevan families took part in the performances; and the philosopher chuckled.

"I am civilising the Allobroges as well as I can. Before I came here the Genevans had nothing to amuse them but bad sermons. I am corrupting all the youth of the pedantic city. I make play-actors of the sons of Syndics. The clergy are furious; but I crush them."

After a while, moreover, his evangelistic efforts received support from an unexpected quarter. In 1766 there were certain political disturbances in the City, and ambassadors were sent from Berne, Zurich, and Paris to assist in composing them. Voltaire suggested to the French ambassador, M. de Beauteville, that he should request admission to the City for a company of Comedians to amuse himself and his suite. Life at Geneva being duller than he liked, M. de

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Beauteville adopted the suggestion; and a request from him was, of course, equivalent to a command. The comedians were introduced; a theatre was arranged for them; and Voltaire could chuckle again. The plenipotentiaries, he wrote, had given his enemies a public whipping, and the populace was delighted with the passages in Tartuffe which fitted the case of the clergy.

When the plenipotentiaries went, the comedians had to go too, and the theatre was shortly afterwards burnt down —apparently by an act of deliberate incendiarism on the part of religious people who disapproved of it. At all events the religious successfully prevented the irreligious from putting the fire out. But it was too late for the conflagration to be of any use for them. The community as a whole—as well as the select circle on the philosopher's visiting list —had by this time acquired a taste for play-going; and in 1772 a fresh company of comedians established themselves at Châtelaine. The ministers lifted up their voices and exhorted their parishioners not to go to see them. Nearly everybody promised faithfully to stay away; but, when the first performance was over, it was found that nearly every one had been. Then the Consistory took the matter up, and thundered concerning the consequences of play-going, and the dangers of amateur dramatic societies which the contagion of the theatre was calling into existence at Geneva.

"Children," the divines declared, "will be badly brought up; domestic discords will trouble families more and more; young men and young women will occupy themselves with nothing but comedy and vainglorious display; the love of pleasure, vanity, and pride will be their favourite emotions;

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indecent familiarities and libertine behaviour will take the place of modesty and chastity. What will not then become the license of our morals! And to what evils will not the laxity of our morals give rise!"

The warning, however, was in vain. In 1782 the theatre was to be definitely and permanently established within the City walls, and in the meanwhile the theatre at Châtelaine continued to be the favourite resort of Genevans of every degree. Voltaire had triumphed; and though he was now an old man, nearing his eightieth birthday, he enjoyed his triumph to the full. A picture of the patriarch at the play is graphically drawn by a letter-writer of the period:—

"Not the least interesting feature of the spectacle was Voltaire himself, leaning his back against the wings in full view of the audience, applauding like a man possessed; now beating the floor with his walking-stick, now interjecting exclamations such as 'Couldn't be better!' 'By God, how good!' and now directing the flow of sentiment by lifting his handkerchief to his eyes. So little could he control his enthusiasm that, at the moment when Ninias quits the scene to brave Assue, he ran after Lekain[1] without considering how he was breaking down the illusion, took him by the hand and kissed him at the back of the stage. It would be difficult to imagine a more ridiculous burlesque; for Voltaire looked like an old man out of a farce, dressed in a bygone

[1] Lekain (1728—1778) was a member of the Comédie Française. Great efforts were made to keep him out; but Louis XV having heard him recite, admitted him: "*Il m'a fait pleurer qui ne pleure guère; je le reçois.*" Much of his success was due to Voltaire's patronage.



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fashion, with his stockings rolled up over his knees, and only able to keep himself on his trembling legs with the help of his stick."

It is a lively picture of a gay and festive patriarch; but it is, of course, an incomplete and one-sided picture of Voltaire. Any other man of the same age, not having to work for his living, would probably have found that to establish the theatre on a sound basis in the face of Puritan opinion furnished him with all the occupation that he needed. With Voltaire it was otherwise. He played many parts; his activities were multifarious.

He was a country squire, beloved by his retainers, constant in his supervision of their interests. Whoever might quarrel with him, they at all events were always loud in his praises. They saw nothing to laugh at in the fact that, in order to save time and trouble, he dressed himself in the morning in the costume which he proposed to wear on the stage in the evening, and came out into the vegetable garden to give orders to the gardener in the fantastic garb of some mediæval hero of romance. In their eyes such eccentricities were overshadowed by the sympathies and charities which kept his memory green long after he was dead.

In this capacity of squire he built his people a church bearing the famous inscription: *Deo erexit Voltaire*. It was, no doubt, a kindly, well-meant act, though it inspired the delightfully sarcastic saying of Dumas that, while the world was relieved to hear that God and Voltaire had been reconciled, it strongly suspected that it was Voltaire who had made the first advances.

His literary energies were prodigious and untiring. He

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wrote many plays and books. He flooded Geneva with irreligious pamphlets to which he gave pious titles calculated to deceive the very elect,—such as *Pensées sérieuses sur Dieu*. He published them anonymously, and, when it suited his purpose, pretended to know nothing about them, so that he was able to chuckle maliciously when *Candide* was condemned to be burnt by the public executioner.

His correspondence was incredibly voluminous—even more voluminous than that of Jean Jacques to whom, as we have seen, the outlay on the postage was such a grave consideration. His correspondents included at least four reigning monarchs: Frederick the Great, Catherine of Russia, Christian VII of Denmark, and Gustavus VIII of Sweden, as well as many illustrious bishops and atheists, Cardinals and Marshals of France. Perfect strangers also wrote to him on the smallest pretexts: students of the French language who desired his opinion on some vexed point of style; an unknown young man who requested the philosopher to inform him by return of post whether the soul was immortal and whether matter was indestructible. And he replied to all his correspondents—to many of them at considerable length. Altogether it has been computed that he wrote, at this period of his life, some 14,000 letters.

At the same time he was entertaining passing strangers with generous hospitality. Genevan friends who came to see his theatrical performances, and could not get home before the closing of the city gates, were always welcome to a bed; if so many of them came that sleeping accommodation could not be found for them, the fiddlers played all night, and there was no need for them to go home till morning.

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Open house was also kept for the distinguished strangers from every country in the world. The establishment at Ferney was a regular halting-place for travellers making the grand tour. The visitors' list included the names, among many others, of the Prince de Ligne, the Duc de Villars, the Marquis de Florian, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, the Maréchale de Richelieu, Grimm, d'Alembert, Marmontel, La Harpe, Lekain', the player, Mlle. Clairon, the actress, Madame d'Epinay, the Duke of Hamilton, Oliver Goldsmith, and Dr. John Moore, the famous author of "Zeluco." Much of our knowledge of his manner of life is derived from their recollections of their intercourse with him.

Dr. Moore for one, was very pleased with his welcome, and, in his stately style, wrote a very sympathetic sketch of the life at Ferney. "The most piercing eyes I ever beheld," he writes, "are those of Voltaire, now in his eightieth year. His whole countenance is expressive of genius, observation, and extreme sensibility. In the morning he has a look of anxiety and discontent; but this gradually wears off, and after dinner he seems cheerful:—yet an air of irony never entirely forsakes his face, but may always be observed lurking in his features whether he frowns or smiles.... Composition is his principal amusement. No author who writes for daily bread, no young poet ardent for distinction, is more assiduous with his pen, or more anxious for fresh fame, than the wealthy and applauded Seigneur of Ferney. He lives in a very hospitable manner, and takes care always to have a good cook. He generally has two or three visitors from Paris, who stay with him a month or six weeks at a time. When they go their places are soon

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supplied; so that there is a constant rotation of society at Ferney. These, with Voltaire's own family, and his visitors from Geneva, compose a company of twelve or fourteen people, who dine daily at his table, whether he appears or not... All who bring recommendations from his friends may depend upon being received, if he be not really indisposed. He often presents himself to the strangers, who assemble every afternoon in his antechamber, although they bring no particular recommendation."

It might have been added that, when an interesting stranger who carried no introduction, was passing through the town, Voltaire would sometimes send for him; but this experiment was not always a success. It certainly failed somewhat ludicrously in the case of Claude Gay, the Philadelphian Quaker, author of some theological works now forgotten, but then of note. The meeting was only arranged with difficulty on the philosopher's undertaking to put a bridle on his tongue, and say nothing flippant about holy things. He tried to keep his promise, but the temptation overcame him. After a while he entangled his guest in a controversy concerning the proceedings of the patriarchs and the evidences of Christianity, and lost his temper on finding that his sarcasms failed to make their usual impression. The member of the Society of Friends, however, was not disconcerted. He rose from his place at the dinner-table, and replied,—

"Friend Voltaire! perhaps thou mayest come to understand these matters rightly; in the meantime, finding I can do thee no good, I leave thee, and so fare thee well."

And so saying, he walked out and walked back to Geneva;

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while Voltaire retired in dudgeon to his room, and the company sat expecting something terrible to happen.

It remains to consider the serious aspects of Voltaire's character, and to call to mind those of his actions which entitle him, in spite of his sneers and his flippancies, to rank with the best of the philanthropists.

He did a great deal of good in his time, and when he did good at all, he did it thoroughly—made a "clean job of it", so to say, in a style that is by no means universal among philanthropists. His kindness to the lady who had no claim on him except that she was the grand-niece of the great Corneille is a case in point. He not only gave her a home, but treated her as a daughter; he not only found her a husband, but provided her with a dowry; he even went so far as to bribe her father, who was unpresentable, to stop away from the wedding.

A still greater glory belongs to him for his indefatigable labours to obtain redress for miscarriages of justice. He did his best to prevent the execution of Admiral Byng by communicating to the Court Martial a private letter from the Comte de Richelieu vindicating his opponent from the charge of cowardice. In the more famous cases of Calas and Sirven—put to death and sentenced to death respectively, for murders of which they were absolutely and obviously innocent—he was not content to pen an indignant protest and then let the matter slide. On the contrary, he gave a refuge, in his own house, to Sirven, and to Calas' widow; and for a period of some two years he made it the main preoccupation of his life to move French opinion in these matters, and obtain the revision of the cases and such

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compensation as it was still possible to give. He succeeded, though there were other cases—such as that of La Barre—in which he laboured with less success. On the occasion of his last triumphant journey to Paris, in 1778, no homage that he received gave him so much pleasure as that of the common people who hailed him as "the deliverer of the Calas." It was of the services which he had rendered to the Calas that he was thinking when he wrote the famous line,

*J'ai fait un peu de bien; c'est mon meilleur ouvrage.*

It is a modest enough boast; and—all things considered and all necessary deductions made—it gives the key-note to Voltaire's character. His ruling passion was the hatred of injustice. If he also hated the Christian religion, it was because he found that prominent Christians—and more particularly prominent Roman Catholics—delayed and hindered justice with arrogant pretentiousness. If he poured the vials of his irony upon the heads of the Geneva pastors, it was because he had an honest contempt for their attitude towards life—their failure to perceive what were the things that really mattered, their tendency to waste in the futile obstruction of the arts precious hours and precious energies which would have been better occupied in righting the wrongs of the oppressed. In recalling the religious wrangles with these pastors we may sometimes be shocked by his lapses, not only from reverence, but from good taste; but, when that happens, we shall do well to remind ourselves that Voltaire, in the course of his life did more actual concrete good, of the sort that one can lay one's hands on, than all the pastors put together.

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# CHAPTER XIX

GRAND TOURISTS AND OTHER TRAVELLERS—STANYAN—GRAY—WILLIAM WINDHAM—LADY MARY COKE—JOHN HOWARD—DR. JOHN MOORE—SIR GEORGE SHUCHBURGH—THOMAS MARTYN

THE period of Voltaire's sojourn at Geneva—together with the years immediately preceding and succeeding it—was also the period when the grand tour was at its grandest. Young Englishmen of wealth and fashion, attended in most cases by discreet and learned guardians, were just then bowling freely about Europe in post-chaises. Many of them made Geneva a halting-place in their journeys; some of them were even sent there to receive their education.[1] A passing glance at their experiences will help us to realise the Geneva of the eighteenth century.

The last distinguished Englishman whose impressions we noted was Joseph Addison; the next whose impressions are worth noticing is Abraham Stanyan. He was Queen Anne's envoy to the Protestant Cantons in 1705—specially instructed to counteract the intrigues of the French minister at Geneva. It was through his diplomacy that the sovereignty of Neuchâtel was assigned to the King of Prussia, in defiance of the wishes of Louis XIV. He also wrote "An account of

[1] The names of those who were members of the University may be found in *Le Livre du Recteur*, published at Geneva in 1860.

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Switzerland written in the year 1714,"—afterwards, incorporated in Abraham Ruchat's "Délices de la Suisse"[1]—which was the first standard English work on the Swiss constitution, and was highly commended by Lord Chesterfield. It is a dull work, and we search it vainly for any picturesque criticism of Geneva.

Better fortune attends us in the case of the visit of Gray and Horace Walpole in 1739. Gray is noteworthy as almost the only writer of his age who had a true feeling for the charm of mountain scenery. He came to Geneva by a circuitous route from Lyon, taking the Grande Chartreuse upon his way, for the express purpose of visiting the mountains, and he found the precipices "romantic" instead of being "put out of humour" by them as Bishop Berkeley was. Of Geneva itself we find a charming and characteristic picture in his letters:

"I do not wonder so many English choose it for their residence; the city is very small, neat, prettily built, and extremely populous; the Rhone runs through the middle of it, and it is surrounded with new fortifications that give it a military, compact air; which, joined to the happy, lively countenances of the inhabitants, and an exact discipline always as strictly observed as in time of war, makes the little Republic appear a match for a much greater Power; though perhaps Geneva and all that belongs to it are not of equal extent with Windsor and its two parks."

Gray was only a week in Geneva, so that he naturally has nothing to tell us about the social life of the city.

[1] One of the first Swiss Guide Books.

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Abundant information on that head, however, is supplied by some travellers who got there two years later. In 1741 arrived Mr. William Windham of Felbrigg Hall, in the county of Norfolk, with his tutor Mr. Benjamin Stillingfleet, the grandson of the illustrious Bishop. This visit is famous because it included a pleasure trip to Chamounix—the earliest recorded excursion of the kind, described by William Windham himself in a pamphlet still treasured by collectors.[1] They remained a long time in Geneva, were intimate with the English Colony, and well received by the local notables, in spite of the fact that, as the archives of the law-courts bear witness, they occasionally got into trouble for damaging the property of farmers when out shooting, and for committing assault and battery. In the life which the Rev. William Coxe wrote of William Windham's "respectable preceptor," we have a graphic picture of the life of that little English colony from the pen of one of the Chamounix party, Mr. Aldworth Neville. The description is so interesting, and so little known, that a long extract seems to be justified:—

"Soon after my arrival at Geneva, the English were going to act a play, the Siege of Damascus; and every part was cast and engaged but one—viz., Herbis. They told me their plan, and proposed my being of their party. I accepted it with the more joy, as I had ever had a taste for acting, and had played several parts at Eton school.... Our suc-

[1] "An Account of the Glaciers or Ice Alps in Savoy. In Two Letters, one from an English Gentleman to his friends at Geneva, the other from Peter Martel, Engineer, to the said English Gentleman." Published at London, 1744.

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cess in this attempt and in Macbeth, which we performed afterwards, was beyond imagination: our countrymen flocked from all parts to see us, and flattered us by declaring that we excelled the London actors... We likewise had Pantomimes; and that the ladies and gentlemen might follow the Play, we made extracts, scene for scene, which were printed and delivered to the spectators, and the applause they paid us showed the pains we took were not lost. For the further honour of our little colony I must add that the Pantomimes were composed by ourselves; and had a regular conduct and plot. The principal scenes were painted by Price [1] and Windham, and very well; and the prettiest airs in the Pantomimes were the composition of Price and Stillingfleet. The several machines likewise, some of which were complicated enough, were designed, directed, and played off by ourselves. The parts were cast as follows:—

MACBETH.

| | |
|---|---|
| Macbeth. | Mr. Aldworth. |
| Macduff. | Mr. Windham. |
| Banquo. | Mr. Price. |
| Malcolm. | Mr. Churchill. |
| Duncan. | Mr. Bateman. |
| Rosse, Donalbaine etc. | Count George de la Lippe. |
| Angus & Bleeding Capt. | Count William de la Lippe. [2] |
| Lady Macbeth. | Mr. Hervey. |

[1] Price also drew a picture of the Mer de Glace for Windham's Pamphlet.

[2] I. e., Count Frederick William Ernest of Lippe Schaumburg, who afterwards distinguished himself in the Seven Years' War.

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"In this play we made several alterations; some from necessity, others from judgment. The omission of Lady Macduff was from the first consideration. The changes of the Witches and their brooms into Magicians with long beards and black gowns, was from the second. This alteration, instead of ridicule, produced additional awe and horror. Garrick has since approved of the idea; but owned he durst not carry it into execution himself for fear of offending the gallery.

PANTOMIMES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Harlequin. | Mr. Churchill. |
| Pierrot. | Mr. Aldworth. |
| Pantaloon. | Count William de la Lippe. |
| Boor Servant. | Mr. Windham. |
| Scaramouch. | Mr. Price. |
| Poet. | Count George de la Lippe. |
| Cobbler. | Mr. Price. |
| Columbine. | Mr. Hervey. |
| Poet's Wife. | Mr. Aldworth. |
| Prompters. | Mr. Crusius.<br>Dr. Dampier. |

Director of the Scenes & Machinist:
Mr. Stillingfleet.

The Orchestra led & directed by the celebrated Violin:
Gaspard Fritz.

"The novelty of a Play at Geneva at that time was a strong circumstance in our favour. The idea caught all kinds of people. Even the Magistrates adopted our plan; and to mark how much they protected us, lent us a place to erect our theatre, and ordered two serjeants of their garrison

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to attend us constantly. Nay, they were themselves present at our representations. To this must have been owing in great measure that, although the whole town was anxious to see us, and we had places only for 200, I do not recollect the least riot or disturbance; indeed, to gratify as many as we could, we acted each play three or four times, by which means there were very few persons of distinction that did not see us once. All foreigners at the Academy for the same purposes as ourselves (among whom were the Princes of Anhalt and others of high rank) received tickets sent from the Society every night: the four Syndics and the English entered without any. This proper attention to so many people left us not more than eight or ten tickets each, which were sure to be disposed of among those families that were most remarkable for showing civility to our countrymen. This policy opened many a door that had been shut against us. We were certainly an excellent troop. Though I have read Cibber, and considered the modern stages both of London and Paris, I really think we saw Lord Bristol equalled but by Mademoiselle Clairon. Price did his parts with great judgment and propriety. My friend Churchill was a perfect Harlequin; I question if Rich was equal to him, combining grace, action, and agility. The eldest Count de la Lippe entered into the very soul of Davan; the youngest (the great Buchburg) would have done better if he had been less conceited. All were perfect in their parts, and superior in every respect to those who in the best theatres are destined to the same performances.

"In the end of the year 1742, I was left the only remaining Member of the Common Room which we established

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in 1740; and, though I had made acquaintance with most of the families of consequence in the town, nothing could prevent my pining for the loss of such friends."

It is a pleasant description, brightened by the fresh enthusiasm and innocent vanity of youth. Our next traveller is Oliver Goldsmith—a traveller of a very different sort. He did the grand tour on foot, supported by voluntary contributions; and it is certain that he got to the Lake of Geneva, and saw Voltaire, in 1755. But the rest is vague. We are free to believe that he played his flute outside Voltaire's house, and that Voltaire invited him to step inside and have a glass of wine, and was surprised and delighted to find that the wandering musician was a man of taste and culture. We are also free to imagine that Voltaire was irritated by the music and sent his servant to tell the musician to go away. There is absolutely no historical evidence supporting or confounding either theory. Let us pass on, therefore, to other tourists of whom more is known. In and about 1760 there were plenty of them.

There was Adam Smith, who spent two months in Geneva, as the guardian of the Duke of Buccleugh, but whose impressions, which would have been valuable, are not recorded. There was James Boswell, who had introductions to both Voltaire and Rousseau, and called upon them both, but unfortunately did not Boswellise them. There was John Tuberville Needham, S.J., who spent many years in travelling about Switzerland in the capacity of guardian to the Earl of Fingall, Lord Gormanston, Charles Dillon and other young men of the best Roman Catholic families. He was

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by way of being a mountaineer before mountaineering was invented, and went about measuring heights with his barometer—especially in the Mont Cenis neighbourhood.[1] At Geneva he engaged in a controversy with Voltaire on the subject of miracles, and was worsted. "He made a mistake," says his judicious and sympathetic biographer, the Abbé Maur, "in challenging, in the gaiety of his heart, an antagonist of Voltaire's calibre."

Some interesting English residents belong to the same period. George Keate, the author—more celebrated in his own day than in ours—lived some time at Geneva. He wrote "An Account of the Ancient History, Present Government and Laws of the Republic of Geneva", which he dedicated to Voltaire in remembrance of "the Hours of Social Mirth and Refined Entertainment which your Hospitality and Conversation afforded me", and a poem, in blank verse, entitled "The Alps", which is so dreary and platitudinous that one can only hope that Voltaire never read it. The Stanhopes also lived in the Republic from 1764 to 1774, in order that Charles, third Earl Stanhope, (then Lord Mahon) might go to school and college there. The project is referred to with enthusiastic approval in Lady Hervey's letters; but the editor of the letters drops in a truculent footnote with the sentiment of which the average English reader will probably agree:

"The plan of educating him abroad was persevered in,

[1] He measured Mont Pourri in that neighbourhood, which he believed to be the highest mountain in Europe. See his *Relation de son voyage sur les Alpes, avec la mesure de leurs hauteurs, comparées à celles des Cordillères.*

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and it so far succeeded as to make him a tolerable *mechanic*, and give him a considerable share of practical science. In other particulars one may venture, without disrespect, to wish that his lordship's genius—which was certainly considerable—had been regulated by the wholesome discipline of an English public school and University. No doubt better watch-makers and mechanics may be made at Geneva; but to fit an English nobleman for the duties of his station all experience seems to show that the old English mode of education is the most generally successful." [1]

In 1769 Lady Mary Coke came to see the Stanhopes at Geneva, on her way to Aix in Provence; and she too prattles picturesquely.

"The situation of Geneva is far more beautiful than that of any other place that I have ever seen. Lord and Lady Stanhope have been there several years... I had other acquaintance at Geneva beside Lady Stanhope, but I passed every evening with her. I could not indeed have been with

[1] Dr. Moore says much the same thing:—

"The most important point, in my mind, to be secured in the education of a young man of rank of our country is to make him an Englishman; and this can be done nowhere so effectually as in England.... An English boy, sent to Geneva at an early period of life, and remaining there six or seven years, if his parents be not along with him, will probably, in the eyes of the English, appear a kind of Frenchman all his life after. This is an inconvenience which ought to be avoided with the greatest attention.... Upon the whole I am clearly of opinion that the earliest period of every gentleman's education, during which the mind receives the most lasting impressions, ought to be in England."

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anybody whose house was out of the town, for the gates are always shut at sunset and never suffered to be opened. Everything, I believe you may have heard, is very strict in that town; the ladies are not suffered to wear any trimmings upon their gowns, or lace of any kind. Monsieur Voltaire lives about a league and a half from Geneva. He is not upon good terms with almost anybody there, which made me fear I should not be able to see him, but a Madame Bontems offered to go with me... Monsieur Voltaire made his appearance—dressed in a flowered silk waistcoat and night-gown, a dark periwig without powder, slippers, and a cap in his hand. He made his compliments to me in English. He mentioned my father and the late Duke of Argyll with great encomiums. He desired to show me his garden, which, in the dress he was in, at seventy-six years of age, and complaining of the weight of those years, I thought dangerous, and desired he would not think of going, but I could not prevent him. Then we returned to the House; a breakfast was prepared...."

And so forth in the light and easy style of one who did not write for publication. A more serious visitor of about the same period was John Howard, the philanthropist. He went over the prison, which he thus described in his report:—

"Here were only five *Criminals;* none of them in irons. Their allowance about sixpence a day: for which they have a pound of good bread, some soup, and half a pint of wine. They looked healthy. Here, as in the Swiss Cantons, men and women are kept separate. For the last year or two no capital punishment. If a criminal flies from justice, they call him in form three days, and after trial, execute him in effigy.



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"No *Debtors:* and there seldom are any. A creditor must allow his debtor in prison as much as felons have from the public: upon failure the goaler gives notice, and then discharges the prisoner. Besides, there are *sumptuary* laws in this state. And though the government is in general mild, there is a severe law against bankrupts, and insolvents, which renders incapable of all honours, and deprives of freedom, not only the debtor himself, but his children after him except such of them as pay their quota of the debts."

Another group of tourists claiming our attention consists of those who took a particular interest in the exploration of the glaciers and snow-peaks. The glaciers of Grindelwald had been written about, in Merian's *Topographie Helvetiæ* as early as 1644, and had furnished the subject of papers in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* for 1669 and 1673/74. Those of Chamounix were practically unknown to geographers when Windham and Pococke—already mentioned—visited them in 1741. These travellers climbed the Montanvert and descended on to the Mer de Glace. Their example, followed in 1742 by the young Swiss engineer, Pierre Martel, made a considerable stir and set a fashion. The Duc de La Rochefoucauld,[1] coming to Geneva with his mother who wished to consult Dr. Tronchin, visited the glaciers in 1763, and regarded the excursion as one establishing his character for intrepidity. He believed that he was the first Frenchman who had been

[1] The Duc is Carlyle's "Anglomaniac Duc," murdered in the course of the Revolution.

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there;[1] but that was a mistake. He also seems to have exaggerated the difficulties of Montanvert, if one may judge from his confessions:

"To avoid tripping, which the stones along the path would have made dangerous, I was obliged to hang on to the tail of my frock-coat, which one of the peasants carried slung over his shoulder."

Some ten years later came Dr. John Moore, the discreet guardian of the Duke of Hamilton. By this time the reputation of the glaciers was such that all other travellers' tales were habitually capped by a reference to them. "Dear Sir," people said, "that is pretty well; but, take my word for it, it is nothing to the glaciers of Savoy." So Dr. Moore went to the glaciers of Savoy, accompanied by the Duke of Hamilton, Mr. Upton, Mr. Kennedy, and Mr. Grenville; and the younger members of the party made a weird attempt to ascend the Aiguille du Dru. Some one had suggested that there ought to be a good view from the top of any one of the Aiguilles.

"This excited the ambition of the D. of H. He sprung up, and made towards the Aiguille du Dru, which is the highest of the four Needles. Though he bounded over the ice with the elasticity of a young chamois, it was a consi-

[1] The Marquis de Maugiron, in 1750, read a paper describing a visit to Chamounix, before the Royal Society of Lyon. There is a reference to the paper in *La Nouvelle Bigarrure*, a magazine published at the Hague in 1753. Earlier still M. Le Pays, the author, had been there in 1669. A letter dated from Chamounix appears in Les Nouvelles Œuvres de M. Le Pays, published at Amsterdam in 1677.

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derable time before he could arrive at the foot of the Needles:—for people are greatly deceived as to distances in those snowy regions.

"Should he get near the top," said Mr. G.—looking after him with eagerness, "he will swear we have seen nothing. But I will try to mount as high as he can; I am not fond of seeing people above me." So saying he sprung after him.

"In a short time we saw them both scrambling up the rock; the D.... had gained a considerable height, when he was suddenly stopped by a part of the rock which was perfectly impracticable (for his impetuosity had prevented him from choosing the easiest way), so Mr. G.—overtook him.

"Here they had time to breathe and cool a little. The one being determined not to be surpassed, the other thought the exploit not worth his while, since the honour must be divided. So, like two rival powers, who have exhausted their strength by a fruitless contest, they returned, fatigued and disappointed, to the place from which they had set out."

Next comes Sir George Shuckburgh, mathematician and Fellow of the Royal Society. He was travelling from 1772 to 1775, and like the Rev. Mr. Needham, S. J., spent a good deal of his time in ascertaining altitudes with his barometer. Among other things he climbed the Mole[1] with M. de Saussure, an excursion of which he has given a graphic account in his *Observations made in Savoy to ascertain the Height of Mountains by the Barometer*, published in

[1] The Mole (6,132 ft) is passed on the road from Geneva to Chamounix. Windham's party ascended it on their way back from the Glaciers.

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1777. After him come the Rev. Thomas Martyn, travelling tutor to Mr. Edward Hartopp, and the Rev. William Coxe, travelling tutor, at different times, to the sons of the Duke of Marlborough and the Earl of Pembroke. The former's "Sketch of a Tour through Swisserland"—which is rather a guide-book than a book of travel—includes an account of Michel Paccard's 1775 attempt to climb Mont Blanc. The latter's "Travels in Switzerland" tells us not only about the first ascent of Mont Blanc, but also about the first ascent of the Titlis.[1]

But it would be idle to attempt an exhaustive list of the grand tourists. It is time to leave them and pass on to Edward Gibbon.

[1] The Titlis (10,627 ft) near Engelberg was the first Swiss snow-peak to be climbed. The first ascent was made by monks, in 1739; the second, which Coxe relates at length, by Mr. Freygrabend of Engelberg.

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## CHAPTER XX

### GIBBON AT LAUSANNE—HIS LOVE FOR MADEMOISELLE CURCHOD—HIS SUBSEQUENT FRIENDSHIP WITH THE NECKERS

GIBBON, as is well known, was banished to Lausanne by a stern parent as a punishment for embracing the Roman Catholic religion. He boarded in the house of M. Pavilliard, a Calvinistic minister, whose instructions were to educate his pupil if possible, but to convert him at all costs. He so far succeeded that the future historian consented to accept the sacrament from a Protestant pastor. The fact that, in ceasing to be a Roman Catholic, he also ceased to be a Christian, either escaped observation or was regarded as of no importance. It speaks well for the tact and amiability of all concerned that, making his first acquaintance with Lausanne in such trying circumstances, Gibbon fell in love with the town, returned to it again and again, and ultimately chose it as the haven of his middle age.

Lausanne, however, was just then a pleasant place to live in—a good deal more pleasant, so far as one can judge, than Geneva. The Vaudois aristocracy, excluded by the Bernese domination from all public affairs of importance in their own country, travelled far and wide, finding employment, sometimes as soldiers, sometimes as teachers, in the service of foreign kings or noblemen, and returned, with widened

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EDWARD GIBBON

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# CHAPTER XX

[illegible] —HIS LOVE FOR MADEMOISELLE [illegible] [illegible] OF THE [illegible] WITH THE [illegible]

[illegible], as is well known, was [illegible] to Lausanne [illegible] parent as a punishment for embracing the [illegible] Catholic religion. He boarded in the house of M. [illegible], a Calvinistic minister, whose instructions were [illegible] his pupil if possible, [illegible] to convert him [illegible]. He [illegible] the [illegible] his [illegible] to [illegible] a Protestant [illegible]. [illegible] that [illegible] a Roman Catholic, he [illegible] to be a Christian [illegible] observation was regarded [illegible] of no importance. [illegible] works [illegible] of all [illegible] making his [illegible] with Lausanne [illegible] such [illegible] [illegible] fell in love with [illegible] to [illegible], and ultimately chose [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible].

[illegible], however, [illegible] a pleasant place [illegible] a good deal more [illegible] Geneva. [illegible] [illegible] most [illegible] [illegible] or [illegible] with [illegible]

EDWARD GIBBON.

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views and polished manners, to spend in their native land the fortunes which they had acquired abroad. Broadly speaking, they formed two coteries—an aristocratic and a learned coterie. But the two sets touched at many points, and Gibbon was made equally welcome in both of them. At first he was treated like a school-boy, suffered from home-sickness, and to console himself, got drunk. Later, being allowed more liberty, he enjoyed himself more rationally, went to parties and picnics, and fell in love with Mademoiselle Suzanne Curchod.

Mademoiselle Curchod was the daughter of a country clergyman,—very well educated, very beautiful, and very generally admired. Her earliest admirers were, naturally, the rising young ministers of the Gospel. It amused her to invite them to sign documents, composed in playful imitation of legal contracts, binding themselves "to come and preach at Crassier as often as she required, without waiting to be solicited, pressed, or entreated, seeing that the greatest of their pleasures was to oblige her on every possible occasion." Her female friends, hearing of this, wrote to her, expressing their disapproval, and strongly advising her to turn the preachers out of the house as soon as they had finished their sermons; but there is no evidence that she followed the advice.

Visiting Lausanne, she extended the circle of her admirers. Her bright intelligence enabled her to shine as a member of a certain Société du Printemps, and also of a certain Académie des Eaux—a debating Club given to the discussion of such problems as "Does an element of mystery really make love more agreeable?" or "Can there be friend-

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ship between a man and a woman in the same sense as between two women or two men?" Her conduct in this connection was such that her friends warned her that her desire to make herself agreeable to young men was too clearly advertised; but it does not appear that the warning made any impression upon her. At all events she was very successful in making herself agreeable to Gibbon—then a lad about eighteen years of age. "Saw Mlle. Curchod. Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori", is one of the early entries in his diary; and we have a picture of Gibbon, at about the same date, from Mlle. Curchod's own pen. In middle age—as we can see from his portraits—he was an ugly, ungainly, podgy little man; but it is not thus that he appears in the portrait drawn by the woman who loved him.

"He has beautiful hair," Mlle. Curchod writes, "a pretty hand, and the air of a man of rank. His face is so spiritual and strange that I know no one like him. It has so much expression that one is always finding something new in it. His gestures are so appropriate that they add much to his words. In a word, he has one of those extraordinary faces that one never tires of trying to depict. He knows the respect that is due to women. His courtesy is easy without verging on familiarity. He dances moderately well."

So these two naturally—and rightly and properly—fell in love; they must have seemed each other's ideal complements if ever lovers were. But they were not to marry. The story of their attachment, their separation, and their subsequent Platonic friendship is one of the world's famous love-stories. Gibbon himself has told the story in one of the most famous passages of his famous autobiography.

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His version of it is absolutely erroneous and misleading; but it must be quoted if only in order that it may be criticised:—

"I need not blush," he writes, "at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a proud and exalted sentiment. The personal attractions of Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content with a small salary and laborious duty in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays du Vaud from the county of Burgundy. In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal, and even learned, education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty, and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honourably encouraged the connection. In a calm

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retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom, and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity; but on my return to England I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that, without his consent, I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle I yielded to my fate; I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself, and my love subsided in friendship and esteem."

Such is Gibbon's story, which is also the accepted story. It is, perhaps, a palliation of its inaccuracies that, at the time when he wrote it down, he and Mademoiselle Curchod —then Madame Necker—were on such terms of tender and affectionate Platonic friendship that neither of them cared to remember or be reminded, that either had ever treated the other badly. We shall come to that matter presently; here it is proper that the inaccuracies should be noted.

Gibbon's story, it will be observed, gives us the impression that, on getting home, he lost no time in opening his heart to his father, and having done this, lost no further time in acquainting Mademoiselle Curchod with his father's views. The truth is that he left Lausanne in 1758, kept Mademoiselle Curchod waiting four years for a letter, and then in 1762, sat down and wrote, breaking off the engagement. One shrinks from the attempt to picture the feelings of the poor girl who, after enduring this long suspense, and trying to frame excuses for this long silence,

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broke the seal of the long-expected missive, only to read:—

"I do not know how to begin this letter. Yet begin it I must. I take up my pen, I drop it, I resume it. This commencement shows you what it is that I am about to say. Spare me the rest. Yes, Mademoiselle, I must renounce you for ever. The sentence is passed; my heart laments it; but, in the presence of my duty, every other consideration must be silent....

"My father spoke of the cruelty of deserting him, and of sending him prematurely to his grave—of the cowardice of trampling under foot my duty to my country. I withdrew to my room and remained there for two hours. I will not attempt to picture to you my state of mind. But I left my room to tell my father that I agreed to sacrifice to him the happiness of my life.

"Mademoiselle, may you be happier than I can ever hope to be. This will always be my prayer; this will even be my consolation... Assure M. & Madame Curchod of my respect, my esteem, and my regrets. Good-bye. I shall always remember Mlle. Curchod as the most worthy, the most charming, of women. May she not entirely forget a man who does not deserve the despair to which he is a prey."

Even this, however, was not the end of the story; though. one would think it was, if one had only Gibbon's narrative to go by. In 1763 he revisited Lausanne; and his own story of his sojourn does not so much as mention Mademoiselle Curchod's name. One would gather from it either that he did not see her, or that love had already on both sides, "subsided in friendship and esteem." But when the

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Vicomte d'Haussonville was given access to the archives of the Necker family, he found letters proving that this was not by any means the case.

Mademoiselle Curchod's father was then dead; and she was then living at Geneva, supporting her mother by giving lessons. Some of her friends—notably Pastor Moultou—tried to bring Gibbon to a sense of the obligations which they felt he owed to her. Rousseau was brought into the business, and expressed an opinion which led Gibbon to retort that "that extraordinary man whom I admire and pity, should have been less precipitate in condemning the moral character and conduct of a stranger." It is useless, however, to try to piece the whole story together—the materials are inadequate. One can only take the letters which the Vicomte d'Haussonville has published—and which, as he points out, are by no means the whole of the correspondence—and see what side-lights they throw upon it.

First we have one of Mademoiselle Curchod's letters. Whether she wrote it because she had met Gibbon and found his manner towards her changed, or was perplexed and troubled because he had not sought a meeting, we have no means of knowing. But it is quite clear that she wrote it under the sense of having been treated badly.

"For five years," she writes, "I have, by my unique, and indeed inconceivable behaviour, done sacrifice to this chimera. At last my heart, romantic as it is, has been convinced of my mistake. I ask you, on my knees, to dissuade me from my madness in loving you. Subscribe the full confession of your indifference, and my soul will adapt itself to the changed conditions; certainty will bring me the tranquillity

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for which I sigh. You will be the most contemptible of men if you refuse to be frank with me. God will punish you, in spite of my prayers, if there is the least hypocrisy in your reply."

The reply is lost. Mademoiselle Curchod presumably destroyed it because it pained her. Apparently it contained a proposal of Platonic friendship as a substitute for love. At all events Mademoiselle Curchod's answer seems to accept that situation—whether with ulterior designs or not. For it begins:—

"What is fortune to me? Besides, it is not to you that I have sacrificed it, but to an imaginary being which will never exist elsewhere than in a silly romantic head like mine. From the moment when your letter disillusioned me, you resumed your place, in my eyes, on the same footing as other men; and after being the only man whom I could love, you have become one of those to whom I feel the least drawn, because you are the one that bears the least resemblance to my chimerical ideal... Follow out the plan that you propose, place your attachment for me on the same footing as that of my other friends, and you will find me as confiding, as tender, and at the same time as indifferent as I am to them."

And the writer proceeds to take up the Platonic position without loss of time, to criticise Gibbon's first essay in literature,[1] to offer him useful introductions, and to ask him to advise her whether she would be likely to be well treated if she took a situation as "lady companion" in England.

[1] *Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature,* finished at Lausanne in 1758, published in London in 1761, and reprinted at Geneva in 1762.

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Even in this Platonic correspondence, however, Gibbon, with a prudence beyond his years, seems to have scented danger.

"Mademoiselle," he wrote, "must you be for ever pressing upon me a happiness which sound reason compels me to decline? I have forfeited your love. Your friendship is left to me, and it bestows so much honour upon me that I cannot hesitate. I accept it, mademoiselle, as a precious offering in exchange for my own friendship which is already yours, and as a blessing of which I know the value too well to be disposed to lose it.

"But this correspondence, mademoiselle, I am sensible of the pleasures which it brings me, but, at the same time, I am conscious of its dangers. I feel the dangers that it has for me; I fear the dangers that it may have for both of us. Permit me to avoid those dangers by my silence. Forgive my fears, mademoiselle; they have their origin in my esteem for you."

And he proceeded to answer her questions concerning the position and prospects of "lady companions" in England, expecting, no doubt, that he would hear no more from her.

Even then, however, the story was not ended. The most passionate of Mademoiselle Curchod's letters bears a later date. It is the letter of a woman who feels that she has been treated shamefully. If it were not that Mademoiselle Curchod found a husband so very soon afterwards, one would also say that it was the letter of a woman whose heart was broken. One gathers from it that, while Mademoiselle Curchod appreciated Gibbon's difficulty in marrying her while he was dependent upon his father, she was willing to wait for him until his father's death should leave him free to

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follow the dictates of his heart. In the meantime she reproaches him for having caused her to reject other offers of marriage, and protests that it is not true—whatever calumnious gossips may have said—that, in Gibbon's absence, she has flirted with other men. Above all she protests that she has not flirted with Gibbon's great friend, M. Deyverdun. Her last words are:—

"I am treating you as an honest man of the world, who is incapable of breaking his promise, of seduction, or of treachery, but who has, instead of that, amused himself in racking my heart with tortures, well prepared, and well carried into effect. I will not threaten you, therefore, with the wrath of heaven—the expression that escaped from me in my first emotion. But I assure you, without laying any claim to the gift of prophecy, that you will one day regret the irreparable loss that you have incurred in alienating for ever the too frank and tender heart of

"S. C."

The rest is silence; and the presumption is strong that these were actually the last words, finally sealing the estrangement between the lovers. If it were not for Mademoiselle Curchod's subsequent attitude towards him, one would be bound to say that Gibbon behaved abominably. But, as we shall see presently, her resentment was not enduring. Perhaps she was aware of extenuating circumstances that we do not know of. Perhaps, in her heart of hearts she was conscious of having spread her net to catch a husband who then seemed such a brilliant match to the daughter of the country clergyman. The letter of the friend who begged

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her not to advertise so clearly her desire to make herself agreeable to men would certainly lend some colour to the suggestion. At any rate, since she herself forgave Gibbon, it seems unfair for anyone else to press the case against him.

It was nearly twenty years later—in 1783—that Gibbon decided to make Lausanne his home.

A good deal of water had flowed under the bridge in the meantime. He had written, and published, half of his history; and that half had sufficed to make him famous. He had been an officer in the militia and a member of Parliament. He had been a constant figure in fashionable society, and an occasional figure in literary society; a fellow-member with Charles James Fox of Boodle's, White's, and Brook's; a fellow-member of the Literary Club with Johnson, Burke, Adam Smith, Oliver Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Sir Joseph Banks. He had held office in the department of the Board of Trade, and lost it at the time of the coalition between Fox and North. His applications for employment in the diplomatic service—whether as Secretary to the Embassy at Paris or as Minister Plenipotentiary at Berne—had been politely rejected. And he had become a middle-aged bachelor whose income, unless supplemented by the emoluments of some public employment, hardly sufficed for the exigencies of his social position.

In these circumstances it occurred to him to propose to his friend M. Deyverdun[1]—the same M. Deyverdun with

[1] Georges Deyverdun (1735—1789) followed Gibbon to England. Gibbon got him the post of tutor to Sir Richard Worsley, with whom he travelled on the Continent. Inheriting money, he took a house at Lausanne, where Gibbon came to

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whom Mademoiselle Curchod vowed that she had never flirted—that they should keep house together at Lausanne. M. Deyverdun, who was also a confirmed bachelor of moderate means, and had a larger house than he wanted, was delighted with the proposal. All Gibbon's friends and relatives told him that he was making a fool of himself; but he knew better. He sold all his property, except his library, and "bade a long farewell to the *fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ*." His first winter, as he puts it in his delightful style, "was given to a general embrace without nice discrimination of persons and characters." This comprehensive embrace completed, he settled down to work.

His life at Lausanne is faithfully mirrored in his letters —more particularly in his letters to Lord Sheffield. It was at once a luxurious and an industrious life. One fact which stands out clearly is that Gibbon took no exercise. He boasts that, in a period of five years, he never moved five miles from Lausanne; he apologises for a corpulence which makes it absolutely impossible for him to cross the Great Saint Bernard; he admits that, when he entertained Mr. Fox, he did not go for walks with that statesman, but hired a guide to do so on his behalf. He also drank a great deal of Madeira and Malvoisie. His letters to Lord Sheffield are full of appeals for pipes of these exhilarating beverages. He declares that they are necessary for the preservation of his health, and appears to have persuaded him-

live with him. He translated *Werther*, and wrote, in collaboration with Gibbon, *Mémoires littéraires de la Grande Bretagne pour les années 1767 et 1768*. He was also a contributor to Bridel's *Etrennes Helvétiques*.



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self that they were good for gout. The consequence was that he had several severe attacks of that distressing malady.

Gout or no gout, however, he freely enjoyed the relaxation of social intercourse. He was never tired of pointing out to his correspondents that, whereas in London he was nobody in particular, in Lausanne he was a leader of society. His position there was in fact similar in many ways to that of Voltaire at Geneva; though he differed from Voltaire in always keeping on the best of terms with all his neighbours. To be invited to his parties was no less a mark of distinction than it had been, a generation earlier, to be invited to the philosopher's parties at Ferney. One of the letters tells us how he gave a ball, and stole away to bed at two a.m., leaving the young people, his guests, to keep it up till after sunrise. He also gave frequent dinners and still more frequent card-parties. When the gout was very bad, he gave card-parties in his bed-room.

Distinguished strangers often came to see him, and gave Lausanne the tone of a fashionable resort. "You talk of Lausanne," he writes, "as a place of retirement, yet, from the situation and freedom of the Pays de Vaud, all nations, and all extraordinary characters are astonished to meet each other. The Abbé Raynal,[1]

[1] A fugitive from the justice of Louis XVI: who objected to the somewhat irreligious sentiments expressed in his *Histoire des deux Indes*. His contemporaries ranked him as the equal of Voltaire; his name was as well known to them as Voltaire's, though now he is forgotten. He was back in Paris for the Revolution; but he survived the Terror, though pamphleteers denounced him as *un vieillard tombé dans l'enfance et le radotage* because he distinguished between liberty and licence (1713—1796).

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the grand Gibbon, and Mercier,[1] author of the *Tableau de Paris* have been in the same room. The other day the Prince and Princess de Ligné, the Duke and Duchess d'Ursel etc., came from Brussels on purpose to act a comedy." And again: "A few weeks ago, as I was walking on our terrace with M. Tissot,[2] the celebrated physician; M. Mercier, the author of the *Tableau de Paris;* the Abbé Raynal; Monsieur, Madame, and Mademoiselle Necker;[3] the Abbé de Bourbon, a natural son of Lewis the Fifteenth; the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, Prince Henry of Prussia, and a dozen Counts, Barons, and extraordinary persons" etc.

From time to time he faced the question whether it would be well to marry. Madame Necker dissuaded him from the enterprise on the ground that in order to marry happily it is necessary to marry young. It is not certain that her advice was disinterested; but it was good advice to give to a man who, after expressing his readiness to adopt "some expedient, even the most desperate, to secure the

[1] Louis Sebastian Mercier (1740—1814) was another man of letters in exile. His *Tableau de Paris* was something of the nature of a guide-book, but with philosophy in it. He was also a dramatic author, and wrote a pamphlet against the Comédie Française. During the Terror he was condemned to death; but Thermidor saved him. During the Empire he wrote against the Emperor.

[2] The fashionable doctor of Lausanne. He was as famous there as Tronchin in Geneva, and for much the same reasons. He wrote many medical treatises—among them an *Essai sur les maladies des gens du monde.*

[3] Subsequently Madame de Stael.

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domestic society of a female companion," summed up his sentiments upon the subject in this candid language:—

"I am not in love with any of the hyænas of Lausanne, though there are some who keep their claws tolerably well pared. Sometimes, in a solitary mood, I have fancied myself married to one or another of those whose society and conversation are the most pleasing to me; but when I have painted in my fancy all the probable consequences of such an union, I have started from my dream, rejoiced in my escape, and ejaculated a thanksgiving that I was still in possession of my natural freedom."

This, however, was not written until after the history was finished. Gibbon never felt the need of a female companion so long as he had his work to occupy him. The fact that he began to feel it acutely as soon as ever the work was done gives an added pathos to this, the most famous and the most frequently quoted passage of his memoirs:—

"I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions on recovery of my freedom, and perhaps, the establishment of my fame.

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But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future fate of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

The life of the historian was, in fact, destined to last only for another six years—years in which he sometimes was desperately anxious to relieve his loneliness, aggravated by the death of Deyverdun, by seeking "the domestic society of a female companion," but inclined, on the whole, to the opinion, encouraged by Madame Necker, that the remedy would be worse than the disease. On the whole we probably shall not be far wrong in conjecturing that the pleasure which he derived from Madame Necker's correspondence and society assisted him in coming to this decision. At any rate we must admit that there are few literary love stories more remarkable than this of the renewal of love some thirty years or so after a lovers' quarrel.

The lovers parted, as we have seen, with high-strung feelings—at least upon the lady's side. They met again soon after Mademoiselle Curchod had accepted the heart and hand of Baron Necker, the rich Parisian banker, destined to become Louis XVI's Minister of Finance. Gibbon, coming to Paris, called, and was well received. We have accounts of the visit from both of them. Madame Necker says that her vanity was flattered because Gibbon appeared to be dazzled by the contemplation of her wealth. Gibbon complains that he was not taken very seriously—that M. Necker invited him to supper every evening, and went to bed,

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leaving him alone with his wife. The philosopher Balzac would have called him a fool, and classed him with the *prédestinés;* but it does not appear that scandal, or occasion for scandal, or anything worse than the interchange of sentimental *persiflage*, resulted.

A gap in the history of their friendship follows; but in 1776 we find the Neckers visiting Gibbon in Bentinck Street. Gibbon writes patronisingly of the husband as "a sensible good-natured creature," and of the wife he says: "I live with her just as I used to do twenty years ago, laugh at her Paris varnish, and oblige her to become a simple, reasonable Suissesse."

We need not interpret this statement *au pied de la lettre;* but the visit certainly marks a stage in the story of their intimacy. Gibbon went to see the Neckers in Paris in the following year; and after his return to London Madame du Deffand told him how she had talked to Madame Necker about him. "We talked of M. Gibbon. Of what else? Of M. Gibbon, continually of M. Gibbon." And Madame Necker herself wrote, at about the same time, with reference to the publication of the first volumes of "The Decline and Fall":—

"Wherever I go, your books shall follow me, and give me pleasure and happiness. If you write too, your letters will be welcome and appreciated. If you do not write... but I refuse to contemplate this painful possibility."

Gibbon's migration to Lausanne and the Neckers' purchase of their famous country seat at Coppet united them by still closer ties; and one cannot help noticing that at this period of their lives—when they were both something

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over fifty years of age—Madame Necker's letters to Gibbon became at once more frequent and more affectionate. Some of those letters, indeed, can only be distinguished from love letters by reading into them our knowledge of Madame Necker's reputation for spotless propriety. We have seen her dissuading Gibbon from marriage on the ground that to marry late is to marry unhappily. Another reason which she gives is that "without a miracle it would be impossible to find a woman worthy of you." Of a contemplated visit to Lausanne she says:—"I am looking forward, with a delightful sentiment, to the day I am to pass with you." And afterwards:—

"Returning here, and finding only the tombs of those I loved so well, I found you, as it were a solitary tree whose shade still covers the desert which separates me from the first years of my life."

And in another letter, more sentimental still, we read,

"Come back to us when you are free. The moment of your leisure ought always to belong to her who has been *your first love and your last.* I cannot make up my mind which of these titles is the sweeter and the dearer to my heart."

What are we to make of it all? Nothing, assuredly, that entitles us to cast a stone at Madame Necker, or to express for Baron Necker a pity which he never felt for himself. Yet one imagines that, after M. Necker, who kept such early hours, had retired to his well-earned repose, there must sometimes have been certain sentimental communings, in which the old note of *persiflage* was no longer to be heard. One listens in fancy to the regrets of these two who

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never forget that they had once been lovers—regrets, no doubt, not openly expressed, but only coyly hinted—for the things that might have been.

The regrets, we may take it, were tempered by the lurking consciousness that things were really better as they were. The lovers must have known that, if they had married on nothing a year, the one would never have written his history and the other would never have had her salon, but they would just have been two struggling nonentities whom the world would never have heard of. They must have felt, too, that the success in life which they had achieved separately, but could not possibly have achieved together, had meant much to them; that in winning it they had fulfilled their destinies; that their temper would have been soured if they had had to live without it. All this they must have admitted to themselves, and even, in their most candid moments, to each other. And yet—and yet—

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## CHAPTER XXI

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## CHAPTER XXI

### REVOLUTIONS AT GENEVA—HOW THEY AROSE AND WHAT THEY AMOUNTED TO—EMINENT CITIZENS—JEAN ANDRÉ DE LUC—BOURRIT—TRONCHIN

GIBBON's last years at Lausanne were clouded by the outbreak of the French Revolution, which caused considerable reflex action at Geneva, and sent many political refugees—the Neckers among them—flying to the Pays de Vaud. The subject is not one with which one is tempted to linger; but as literary and political history are, to a certain extent, inter-related, it will be worth while to summarise, as briefly as possible, the story of the political turmoils which diversified the lives of Genevans in the eighteenth century.

A modern analogy will help to make the situation clear; the story being, in fact, a long story of acrimonious relations between Burghers and Uitlanders. The Burghers were, in the main, the descendants of the families already possessed of the rights of citizenship in the half-century following the Reformation; the Uitlanders were the descendants of immigrants who had settled in the City since that period. The Burghers enjoyed political rights, and the Uitlanders did not; the gulf between the two classes was only occasionally passed by an exceptional Uitlander whom the Burghers considered "fit". By degrees, however, the Uitlanders became more numerous than the Burghers, and a form of govern-

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ment which had been a Democracy became an Oligarchy, in which many of the most intelligent and reputable citizens had no voice.

For a time the system worked well enough—or at all events worked without any outward signs of friction; but, throughout the eighteenth century, friction was constantly occurring, and insurrections, described by some historians as revolutions, broke out at intervals. There were revolutions of sorts in 1707, in 1737, in 1766, in 1782, and in 1789, with minor revolutions intervening. The recognised mode of composing the troubles was to invite the mediation of foreign powers,—and more particularly of France. The first step of the French mediator was generally, as we have seen, to demand that a theatre should be opened and a company of comedians installed in it for his diversion. But he also mediated, the result of his mediation being to arrange a compromise between the rival claims. Each compromise did something to improve the position of the Uitlanders; but no compromise really removed their grievances or satisfied their claims.

This was the situation when the news came of the great Revolution in France. The movement, which began with such high hopes and such bright enthusiasms, had many partisans in Geneva. Public opinion was further worked upon by various Jacobin emissaries, who pretended to be ordinary tourists, and were furnished with unexceptionable introductions, but allied themselves with the "advanced" section of the population, and encouraged and assisted in the formation of Revolutionary Clubs. Then all the features of revolutionary Paris were, one after the other, reproduced

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in little. There was a party which called itself the Mountain, and a whirlwind of political pamphlets written, for the more part, by young men hardly out of their teens; there were caps of liberty, and trees of liberty, and demonstrations in honour of the memory of Jean Jacques. Finally, there was a Revolutionary Tribunal, a thirst for blood, a Reign of Terror, and some shooting of prominent men for vague, indefinable offences.

Luckily, however, the Reign of Terror began late and consequently did not last long. Thermidor was already in sight when political dissension culminated in judicial murder, and the events of Thermidor found a speedy echo at Geneva. Unreasonable executions stopped, and things to a certain extent settled down; the next important development belonging to the year 1798, when the Republic was "taken over" by the Directorate, and merged first in the French Republic and afterwards in the French Empire.

It may seem strange to read that the years in which these things were happening were also the years in which Geneva attained the greatest eminence as a centre of literary and scientific culture. The explanation probably is that these Genevan Revolutions over which the Genevan historians have spilt such a quantity of ink were not such very important matters after all. So far as one can make out, the graver of them were hardly more grave than the Peterloo massacre, while the less grave hardly attain to the gravity of the Bloody Sunday Riots. A man of letters who took part in one of them on the losing side might suffer unpleasant consequences. He might have his writings burnt by the common hangman, as Bérenger's were; he might be

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driven into exile, as were de Lolme, who came to London, where he wrote his famous work on the British Constitution; and d'Ivernois, who went to Paris and became one of the most pungent critics of Republican administration and finance. Such things might happen, and in many cases did. But there were no such violent or such continual disturbances as need take up the whole of a literary man's time, or prevent him from getting on steadily with his work.

The age of the Genevan Revolutions is, therefore, also to be regarded as the Augustan age of Genevan Literature, and—more particularly—of Genevan Science. There were exiled Genevans, like de Lolme, holding their own in foreign political and intellectual circles; there were emigrant Genevan pastors holding aloft the lamps of culture and piety in many cities of England, France, Russia, Germany, and Denmark; there were Genevans, like François Lefort,[1] holding the highest offices in the service of foreign rulers; and there were numbers of Genevans at Geneva of whom the cultivated grand tourist wrote in the tone of a disciple writing of his master. One cannot glance at the history of the period without lighting upon many well-known names. It is the period of de Saussure, Bourrit, the de Lucs, the two Hubers, great authorities respectively on bees and birds; Le Sage, who was one of Gibbon's rivals for the heart of Mademoiselle Curchod; Senebier, the librarian who wrote the first literary history of Geneva; Saint Ours and Arlaud, the painters; Charles Bonnet, the entomologist; Bérenger and Picot, the historians; Tronchin, the physician; Trembley and Jalla-

[1] A General in the service of Peter the Great.

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bert, the mathematicians; Dentan,[1] pastor and Alpine explorer; Mallet, the traveller; Pietet, the editor; and Odier who taught the Genevans the virtue of vaccination.

It is obviously impossible to dwell at length upon the careers of all these eminent men. As well might one attempt, in a short survey of English literature, to discuss in detail the careers of all the celebrities of the age of Anne. One can do little more than remark that the list is marvellously strong for a town of some 30,000 inhabitants, and that many of the names included in it are not only eminent but interesting. Jean André de Luc, for example, has a double claim upon our attention as the inventor of the hygrometer, and as the pioneer of the snow-peaks.[2] He climbed the Buet as early as 1770, and wrote an account of his adventures on its summit and its slopes, which has the true charm of Arcadian simplicity. He came to England, was appointed reader to Queen Charlotte, and lived in the enjoyment of that office, and in the gratifying knowledge that Her Majesty kept his presentation hygrometer in her private apartments, to the venerable age of 90.

Bourrit is another interesting character—being in fact

[1] "M. le Ministre Dentan" accompanied Jean André de Luc on the occasion of the ascent of the Buet.

[2] Jean André de Luc made two ascents of the Buet—in 1770 and 1772 respectively—and attempted the ascent as early as 1765. These are the earliest ascents of snow-peaks in Europe of which we have any information; for details are wanting about the ascent of the Titlis by the Engelberg monk in 1739. The earliest of all ascents of snow-peaks, however, was the ascent of Popocatepell by the soldiers of Cortez.

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the spiritual ancestor of the modern Alpine Clubman. By profession he was Precentor of the Cathedral; but his heart was in the mountains. In the summer he climbed them, and in the winter he wrote books about them. One of his books was translated into English; and the list of subscribers published with the translation shows that the public which Bourrit addressed included Edmund Burke, Sir Joseph Banks, Bartolozzi, Fanny Burney, Angelica Kauffman, David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Augustus Selwyn, Jonas Hanway, and Dr. Samuel Johnson. His writings earned him the honourable title of Historian (or Historiographer) of the Alps. Men of science wrote him letters; princes engaged upon the grand tour called to see him; princesses sent him presents as tokens of their admiration and regard for the man who had taught them how the contemplation of mountain scenery might exalt the sentiments of the human mind.

Tronchin too is interesting; he was the first physician who recognised the therapeutic use of fresh air and exercise, hygienic boots, and open windows. And so is Charles Bonnet, who was not afraid to stand up for orthodoxy against Voltaire; and so is Mallet, who travelled as far as Lapland. But space forbids the detailed examination of their achievements. The most that one can do is to illustrate the epoch by narrating the events of one career; and the career selected must of necessity be that of the man of whom his contemporaries always spoke, with the reverence of hero-worshippers, as "the illustrious de Saussure."

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HORACE BENEDICT DE SAUSSURE

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HORACE BENEDICT DE SAUSSURE

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## CHAPTER XXII

### THE ILLUSTRIOUS DE SAUSSURE—HIS EXPLORATIONS OF THE ALPS—HIS POLITICAL EXPERIENCES—HIS MERITS AS A MAN OF SCIENCE AND AS A MAN OF LETTERS

HORACE BENEDICT DE SAUSSURE—better known as "the illustrious de Saussure"—belonged to an old, a distinguished, and a reasonably wealthy family. The most remote of his ancestors who can be traced is Mongin Schouel *(dit de Saulxures)* who flourished at the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th centuries, as the Lord of many manors, and the Grand Falconer of the Duke of Lorraine. Mongin's son, Antoine, succeeded him in the office of Grand Falconer, but got into trouble on account of his religious opinions. He was accused of instilling Protestant heresies into the mind of the young Duke, a minor, and was duly cast into prison. Duly escaping, he sojourned successively at Metz, Strasburg, Neuchâtel, Lausanne, and Geneva, where he was accepted a burgher in 1556. His descendants intermarried with the best Genevan families—Trembleys, Burlamaquis, Calandrinis, Diodatis, Budés, Neckers.

The great de Saussure's father was Nicolas de Saussure, himself a man of some distinction, favourably known as the author of some solid works on agriculture and agricultural

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economics. Nicolas de Saussure had a Tronchin and a Turretini for his brothers-in-law, and himself married Renée de La Rive, a sister-in-law of the eminent naturalist, Charles Bonnet.[1] His still more eminent son was born in 1740—just a year before the discovery, by English tourists, of that Valley of Chamounix, with the exploration of which his own name was to be indissolubly associated. His contemporaries agree in praising the manner in which his mother brought him up. This is how his biographer, M. Senebier, pastor and librarian of Geneva, puts it:—

"She accustomed him, from his early years, to the privations which belong to the history of the human species; she hardened him to bear the ills resulting from physical fatigue and the inclemency of the seasons; she taught him to bear unavoidable inconveniences without complaining, and to sacrifice pleasure to duty with a light heart."

According to our modern notions this is merely a way of saying that she brought him up in the way in which boys always ought to be, and in England generally are, brought up. But those were days when it was usual for well-to-do parents to coddle and pamper their children; and in breaking that rule Madame de Saussure revealed herself, in her small way, as an educational reformer. How firmly the rule was established in people's minds, and how little the average Genevan understood the natural desire of a young man to rough it in quest of adventure (otherwise than

[1] Bonnet was not merely a naturalist, but a philosopher with a taste for controversy. He stood up to Voltaire not altogether unsuccessfully. His fame was great while he lived, though it has not survived him.

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as a soldier of fortune) is shown by M. Senebier's comment on de Saussure's first tour to Chamounix in 1760. It is merely a question, be it observed, of a healthy young man of 20 starting for a walking tour.

"I do not know" (writes M. Senebier) "which is the more amazing, the courage of a young man braving public opinion and executing his project in spite of it, or the sound sense of his parents who expressed their contempt for an accepted prejudice, and, relying on their son's prudence, permitted him to undertake the journey."

It reads strangely, but it is, after all, pretty much the line that one would expect an eighteenth-century pastor and librarian to take towards a walking tour. We note it, and pass on to note that this walking tour marked an epoch in de Saussure's life. Nominally his work in life was that of a Professor at the Geneva University; he stood, unsuccessfully, for the mathematical professorship at the age of twenty, and he was appointed to the professorship of philosophy at the age of twenty-two. But his real work, continued almost until his death, was that of the student and exponent of the mountains. Some time before the end, he was able to boast that he had crossed the Alps by eight different passes, made sixteen other excursions to the centre of the range, and travelled in the Jura, the Vosges, and the mountains of Dauphiné.

His marriage—he married young—by no means hindered him from travelling, though it may have been the cause that sometimes determined him to visit cities instead of glaciers. In 1768, for example, he took his wife and his two sisters-in-law to Paris and London. In the former city he met



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all sorts and conditions of people. The Duc de La Rochefoucauld—whose acquaintance we have already made as an early French explorer of the glaciers—introduced him to Buffon; the Duc's mother, the Duchesse d'Enville, made much of him in her salon; he also paid several visits to the grocer, Bonnard, who had a valuable collection of fossils in the back parlour of his shop. In London he met Sir John Pringle[1] and David Garrick, was shewn over the British Museum by the Principal Librarian, Dr. Maty, and presented by the Duchess of Portland with an unique and valuable cabinet.

In 1772 he took his wife to Italy, and came to know many other eminent men—Père Jacquier,[2] the Marquis de Beccaria,[3] Spallanzani,[4] Sir William Hamilton and others. The Pope received him "with the simplicity and cordiality of a prior offering a stranger the hospitality of his convent." Sir William Hamilton took him up Vesuvius, and he also made the ascent of Etna.

These journeys, however, were only interludes. His heart was in the Alps. There is reason to believe that Madame de Saussure held that the climbing of the Alps was an unsuitable occupation for a married man, quite failing to un-

[1] President of the Royal Society, and author of "Observations on the Diseases of the Army."

[2] Professor of Physics and Mathematics at Rome, and author of many mathematical treatises.

[3] The eminent political economist, author of a famous treatise on Punishment.

[4] Professor of Natural History at Padua, and an early mountaineer. He explored the Apennines and ascended Etna.

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derstand his readiness to sacrifice the comforts of the domestic hearth in order to revolutionise the science of geology. But he put his foot down in a letter which may perhaps be read with profit by other ladies besides her to whom it was addressed :—

"In this valley, which I had not previously visited, I have made observations of the greatest importance, surpassing my highest hopes; but that is not what you care about. You would sooner—God forgive me for saying so—see me growing fat like a friar, and snoring every day in the chimney corner, after a big dinner, than that I should achieve immortal fame by the most sublime discoveries, at the cost of reducing my weight by a few ounces and spending a few weeks away from you. If, then, I continue to undertake these journeys in spite of the annoyance they cause you, the reason is that I feel myself pledged in honour to go on with them, and that I think it necessary to extend my knowledge on this subject, and make my works as nearly perfect as possible. I say to myself: Just as an officer goes out to assault the fortress when the order is given, and just as a merchant goes to market on market-day, so must I go to the mountain when there are observations to be made."

Nor was it only in the domestic circle that de Saussure could put his foot down if required. In one of the Genevan revolutions—that of 1782—he also showed his mettle in an energetic fashion. He was a magistrate at the time, and, one day, when he came down to the Hôtel de Ville, he found that the popular party had risen in revolt and seized the building. The rioters requested him to take his place,

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and exercise magisterial functions on lines which they would dictate. When he refused, they arrested him, but released him on the following day. Then, hearing that they proposed to search his house for arms, he decided to resist. He, Trembley the mathematician, his family, his servants, and his dog, constituted the tiny garrison. They barricaded the doors, stationed themselves at the windows armed with muskets, and successfully defied a gang of revolutionists who came to blow them up with hand-grenades. His assailants were reduced to threatening to murder his friends if he did not surrender; and it was only this final menace that brought about the capitulation of the Genevan Fort Chabrol.

Our business here, however, is not with the politician, but with the traveller and the man of science. His widest celebrity is no doubt due to his famous ascent of Mont Blanc. If he was not the first man to climb that mountain, he was, at any rate, the first to believe that it could be climbed. Bourrit, as late as 1773, had written of "the absolute impossibility of attaining to its summit." De Saussure, as early as 1760 had offered a reward to anyone who could find a way to the top, and undertaken to pay a day's wages to anyone who tried and failed. The reward was not claimed until twenty-six years later, when Jacques Balmat got it. When the way was found, de Saussure, though now forty seven years of age, at once made haste to follow it. His ascent—the third—was accomplished on August 3, 1787; he published a short pamphlet, giving an account of it, in the course of the same year.

The climb was, beyond question, a great feat for a phi-

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losopher of forty-seven, and it brought the name of de Saussure under the notice of thousands of people who would never otherwise have heard of him. A still greater feat, accomplished a little later, was the camping out, for something over a fortnight, on the Col du Géant. But it is not upon either of these feats that de Saussure's real fame reposes. He is reckoned among great men, partly because he was the first student of geology who knew his business, and partly because he is the only Alpine writer of his period whose works have stood the test of time.

The geologists who preceded him fall into two classes. There were the mere fossilizers, who had about as much claim to be considered men of science as have the stamp collectors of the present day; there were the theorists who geologised, so to say, in the air, threw out hasty generalisations from their studies, and thought it beneath their dignity as philosophers to correct these hypotheses by the further observation of phenomena. De Saussure combined their methods. His life was one long, patient study of the geolological phenomena. But he collected in order to collate; his aim was always to see the part in its relation to the whole, the particular in its relation to the general; and he had a fine contempt for the amateurs who collected fossils in the same spirit in which they might have collected pottery or bric-à-brac.

"The one aim," he wrote, "of most of the travellers who call themselves naturalists is the collection of curiosities. They walk, or rather they creep about, with their eyes fixed upon the earth, picking up a specimen here and a specimen there, without any eye to a generalisation. They

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remind me of an antiquary scratching the ground at Rome, in the midst of the Pantheon or the Coliseum, looking for fragments of coloured glass, without ever turning to look at the architecture of these magnificent edifices."

The most remarkable thing, however, is that de Saussure, being a geologist, should also have been a stylist. He certainly never meant to be one. He would never have written a book merely to show his skill in word-painting; his one purpose in writing was to communicate discoveries of importance. At the time when Bourrit was making himself famous by his picturesque descriptions of the Alps, the greater man wrote to him modestly: "I too have an idea of publishing something on the natural history of these mountains. It is with that end in view that I have been studying them for so many years." And in the introduction of his great work, he apologises for what seems to him the baldness of his style:—"More practised in climbing rocks than in polishing phrases, I have attempted nothing more than to render clearly the objects which I have seen, and the impressions which I have felt."

It was an apology offered without affectation or false modesty. It announced a departure from the literary fashion of the day, which was to write of the mountains in the language of high-flown sentiment. Rousseau had set the fashion; Ramond de Charbonnière, the philosopher of the Pyrenees, was ready to carry it on; de Luc and Bourrit were doing what they could. De Saussure wished to announce himself as the disciple of none of these, but as the plain man of science who had made a careful study of his subject, and wished to be heard because of what he

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had to say and not because of his manner of saying it. He hardly understood that he was, in the full sense of the word, a man of letters—a literary artist. That is a point which has since been settled in his favour by his readers.

He might easily have written a treatise that would have been invaluable to specialists and intolerable to every one else. Guided by a sure instinct he preferred to write the narrative of his journeys, taking the reader, as it were, by the hand, making him his confidant, showing him his discoveries in the order in which he makes them, and so luring him on to take an interest in a subject generally accounted dull. And, though his first care was always to observe, and to compare his observations, with a view to the advancement of learning, there always was in him something of the poet, which must out from time to time, temporarily giving the go-by to the man of science.

One finds this vein of poetry in the writings of most men of science—naturally, seeing that they used gifts of imagination differing from those of the poet only in being disciplined and chastened, and ready to submit themselves to the thraldom of the established fact. Sometimes, indeed, the vein of poetry has interfered with business, as in the case of the ingenious Scheuchzer[1] who laid himself out to prove that there were dragons in the Alps, or, in a less degree, in the case of Buffon. But, whether it interferes

[1] Johann Jacob Scheuchzer, Professor at Zurich, and a member of the Royal Society. Sir Isaac Newton paid for the production of some of the prints in his *Itinera per Alpinas Helvetiæ regiones facta.* For a summary of his Views on Dragons, see "The Early Mountaineers" by Francis Gribble (Fisher Unwin).

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with business or not, there the vein of poetry almost always is. Such old men of science as Conrad Gesner, and such modern men of science as Huxley and Tyndall, have shown us with what striking effect it can be worked. It is because de Saussure worked it so well that his writings still live, though, regarded merely as text-books, they have long since been superseded.

The humanity of the man is continually flashing out at us in the reflections and anecdotes with which he illustrates the manners of the strange peoples in the strange places which he visited. Sometimes it is a flash of humour, as when he enquires the motives that impel men to be chamois hunters—a trade that never pays. "It is the dangers," he concludes; "the constant alternation of hopes and fears, the continual emotion thus engendered, which excite the hunter, just as they excite the gambler, the soldier, the navigator, and even, to a certain extent, the naturalist of the Alps."

Sometimes it is a touch of pathos, as in the story of the old woman of Argentière whose father, husband and brothers had all perished, within a few days, from an epidemic:—

"After she had given me some milk, she asked me where I came from, and what I was doing there at that season of the year. When she knew that I was from Geneva, she told me that she could not believe that all the Protestants were to be damned; that God was too good and too just to condemn us all without distinction. Then, after reflecting for a moment, she shook her head and added: 'But what is so strange to me is that of all those who have been taken away from us, not one has ever come

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back.' 'I,' she added, with a look of pain, 'have wept so for my husband and my brothers, and have never ceased to think of them, and every night I implore them to tell me where they are, and whether they are happy. Surely, if they existed anywhere, they would not leave me in this doubt. But perhaps,' she added, 'it is because I am not worthy of this favour. Perhaps the pure and innocent souls of those children there—she pointed to the cradle as she spoke—are conscious of their presence, and enjoy a happiness that is denied to me.'"

At other times, in the midst of some account of observations and experiments, or at the close of some technical talk about granite, mica, porphyry and schist, we are suddenly arrested by some descriptive passage of marvellous power and beauty. It is not deliberate word-painting, such as one finds in Rousseau, Ramond de Carbonnière, Bourrit, Javelle, Sir William Conway, and the contributors to the *Alpine Journal.* It is merely de Saussure's honest attempt to tell his reader exactly what he saw. He puts the thing poetically because he must—because in fact, that is how he saw it, and because he feels that, in relation to such a scene, the language of poetry is really the language of truth and soberness.

Let us take the passage which describes the last night spent upon the Col du Géant. But let us leave it in the French. It is only quoted to show how de Saussure wrote when the poet in him triumphed over the man of science, and it would be absurd to try to show that in a translation. He writes:—

"La seizième et dernière soirée que nous passâmes sur le

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Col du Géant fut d'une beauté ravissante. Il semblait que toutes ces hautes sommités voulussent que nous ne les quittassions pas sans regret. Le vent froid qui avait rendu la plupart des soirées si incommodes ne souffla point ce soir-là. Les cimes qui nous dominaient et les neiges qui les separent se colorérent des plus belles nuances de rose et de carmin; tout l'horizon de l'Italie paraissait bordé d'une ceinture, et la pleine lune vint s'élever au-dessus de cette ceinture avec la majesté d'une reine, et teinte du plus beau vermillon. L'air autour de nous, avait cette pureté et cette limpidité parfaite qu'Homère attribue à celui de l'Olympe, tandis que les vallées remplies des vapeurs qui s'y étaient condensées, semblaient un séjour d'épaisses ténèbres.

"Mais comment peindrai-je la nuit qui succéda à cette belle soirée, lorsque après le crépuscule la lune, brillant seule dans le ciel, versait les flots de sa lumière argentée sur la vaste enceinte des neiges et des rochers qui entouraient notre cabane? Combien ses neiges et ses glaces dont l'aspect est insoutenable à la lumière du soleil, formaient un étonnant et délicieux spectacle à la douce clarté du flambeau de la nuit? Quel magnifique contraste ces rocs de granits rembrunis et découpés avec tant de netteté et de hardiesse formaient au milieu de ces neiges brillantes! Quel moment pour la méditation! De combien de peines et de privations de semblables moments ne dédommagent-elles pas! L'âme s'élève, les vues de l'esprit semblent s'agrandir, et au milieu de ce majestueux silence on croit entendre la voix de la nature, et devenir le confident de ses opérations les plus sécrètes."

It is a wonderful picture, wonderfully drawn. The familiar

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MADAME DE STAEL.

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MADAME DE STAEL.

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*Cela est peint* is the obvious comment on it. It is the description of a man of science—for every detail of the picture is carefully observed and rendered. But it is also the description of a poet who rejoices in the pathetic fallacy, and personifies not only nature, but also individual natural objects. Perhaps the most wonderful thing of all is that such a passage should be found embedded in a really valuable and solid treatise of geology. Ramond never beat it, though he laid himself out to do so, and in his earlier works at all events, never allowed geological considerations to interfere with the free flow of sentiment.

It is sad to relate that, after having made himself known to all Europe as "the illustrious de Saussure," the pioneer of geological discovery fell upon evil days. But so it was. His health broke down; in 1794 he began to have paralytic strokes. His fortune—the greater part of it at all events—was lost through the collapse of securities during the French Revolution. He was on the side that suffered most in the political disturbances which the Revolution engendered at Geneva.

In the midst of those disturbances, his father-in-law, Charles Bonnet, died, and de Saussure, himself almost to be reckoned a dying man, was called upon to pronounce his public eulogium. But the disturbances made it necessary for the ceremony to be postponed. A letter in which Madame de Saussure narrates the incident gives us a clear impression not only of the day, but also of the times of which the day was representative.

"Yesterday," she writes "I spent one of those days of emotion which do not affect us the less because we ought

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to be getting used to them. The people took up arms by order of the Committees of the Clubs. The gates were shut, the cannon rumbled along the streets, screaming women leant out of their windows to look. In the evening the town had that military air which you have sometimes seen in it —the streets full of armed citizens with flaming torches, patrols challenging the passers-by—and all this lasted till two or three in the morning; whereas to-day, everyone is at his shop, his café, or his office. And this tumultuous day had been selected for the celebration of the memory of the most peaceable of citizens—your uncle, Charles Bonnet."

And so, amid such sorry scenes, the end approached. De Saussure sought relief and health in travel. He took the waters at Plombières, but without any good result, and died early in 1799, the great Cuvier pronouncing his eulogy before the Institut de France.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### MADAME DE STAEL—HER MARRIAGE—HER DIFFERENCES WITH NAPOLEON—HER TEN YEARS' EXILE—HER SALON AT COPPET

In passing from M. de Saussure to Madame de Stael, we are carried back from the atmosphere of the natural sciences to that of sentimentalism. From one point of view Madame de Stael may be regarded as the inheritress of the kingdoms of Richardson, Rousseau, and Bernardin de Saint Pierre; from another she appears as the ancestress of the New Women of the present day. When New Women lay claim, as they have been known to do, to the merit of originality, it would be pertinent to remind them that, in their most distinguishing characteristics—their dissatisfaction with the marriages which they have contracted, their vague longing for some happiness which the trivial round does not supply, their disregard of the conventions, and their habit of writing books about their *état d'âme*—they have been anticipated by Madame de Stael. She differed, no doubt, from a good many of them in being a woman of the world, and, for a period, a force in politics. But in all essentials she was their pioneer: she belongs to this book because she is the only woman who ever established a salon worthy of the name on the banks of Lake Geneva; but she is interesting for many other reasons.

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Her father was Jacques Necker—Louis XVI's finance minister,—who had sufficient sense of humour to write comic verses, and sufficient sense of another sort to refrain from publishing them, lest they should bring discredit upon the bank in which he was a partner; her mother was "la belle Curchod", whose attachment to the historian of the Roman Empire we have discussed. It was apparently from her father—solemn and lugubrious though he seemed to casual acquaintances—rather than from her mother that she inherited her sprightliness of disposition. At all events it is recorded that he and she used often to throw the dinner-napkins at each other, when the Baroness Necker had risen from the table and given them the opportunity of thus unbending; and her memoir of his career, though this trait is not mentioned in it, shows, in every line, how fond she was of him.

Her bringing up was different from that of most children of her period and position. When she was no more than eleven, she was allowed to sit in her mother's salon, and listen to the conversation of the wits. Clever men treated her as a grown-up person while she was still a child. She learnt to behave like a grown-up person. Surrounded by people who wrote—Baron Grimm, Abbé Raynal, Morellet, La Harpe, Marmontel,—she began to put her own thoughts on paper before she was out of her teens. Most of what she then wrote is naturally devoid of value; but one perspicuous phrase, from a paper on Jean Jacques, deserves to live:—"Julie's continual sermons to Saint Preux are out of place; a guilty woman may love virtue, but she should not preach about it." Which shows, at any rate, that the first

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of the New Women did not propose to go through life, as some of her successors have done, without a clear and well-defined sense of humour.

Her mother—a model mother in some respects—arranged a marriage for her without reference to the state of her affections. The difficulty was to find an eligible *parti* who was also a Protestant; and among the suitors passed in review were William Pitt and General Guibert.[1] Germane Necker would have had something in common with both of them; she lived to share both Pitt's hostility to Napoleon, and Guibert's indifference to the most striking features of Swiss scenery. But she was not to marry either of them, the choice ultimately falling upon Eric Magnus, Baron de Stael Holstein, the Swedish minister, whom the Swedish King agreed to promote to the rank of ambassador on condition that the cost of the change should be defrayed by Mlle. Necker's dowry.

There is no case against him except that he was a spendthrift—a quality that does not necessarily prevent a man from being loved. But Madame de Stael did not love him, though, as she explains in her novel, *Delphine*, to find happiness in marriage was the great dream of her life. On intimate acquaintance he probably struck her as a good-

[1] General Jacques-Antoine-Hippolyte, Comte de Guibert, had fought in Germany and Corsica, and was the author of some works on tactics. He is perhaps best known as the lover of Mademoiselle Lespinasse. In a volume of travels, published after his death, we find an account of an early visit to Grindelwald, and an expression of opinion that glaciers are not worth going to see.

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natured fool; and a clever woman seldom appreciates the merits of a good-natured fool until she has passed middle-age—though then she is apt to rejoice in him, if he is young and beautiful. So Madame de Stael put up with her husband, and sometimes lived with him, and even made a journey for the purpose of visiting him on his death-bed in 1802. But he did not fill her heart, which, from time to time, had various other tenants.

Her life cannot be written here except in barest outline. Her record, during the French Revolution is praiseworthy. She remained in Paris, after her husband's departure, well on into the Terror, in order to help her friends—Narbonne, Jaucourt, and Lally-Tollendal—to save their lives. Then she joined her father at Coppet, and from Coppet paid a visit to England, where she numbered among her friends such refugees as Talleyrand, Guibert, Narbonne, Girardin, and General d'Arblay, who afterwards married Fanny Burney. After the Terror she returned to Paris, and had a notable Salon there during the Directorate, though she visited Coppet from time to time. She quarrelled with Napoleon, and was forbidden to live within forty leagues of Paris. This was the beginning of the "ten years' exile", described in one of the best known of her books.

Part of the time was spent in travel. She went to Weimar where she met Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and Fichte. The general opinion of these German sages was that she talked too much; and Fichte in particular had some reason to be vexed by her volubility. She invited him to epitomize his philosophy in a statement lasting only a quarter of an hour, and interrupted him at the end of two minutes to say that

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she understood it—the Fichtean Ego was a device for helping lame philosophers over stiles. He naturally gathered the impression that she was shallow and superficial. But, though she offended him and some others, she captivated Schlegel, who became her warm friend and her children's tutor.

Another journey was to Italy, whither Madame de Stael invited M. Camille Jordan [1] to accompany her, as "an act of charity to one whose soul is cruelly wounded." He declined the invitation, and her comment on his refusal is not devoid of interest. "I well know," she wrote, "that what is generally called common sense would not be in favour of my suggestion, but I had something better than that in contemplation when I wrote to you." Yet she managed to enjoy herself without him, making the acquaintance of the Queen of Naples, Maria Caroline of Austria, the Countess of Albany, and Monti, the Milanese poet—*caro* Monti as she called him—with whom she engaged in a long and affectionate correspondence. On her return to Coppet she wrote *Corinne*—the book which, together with *Delphine*, establishes her claim to be called the first of the New Women. It is a book of self-revelation—the bitter cry of the woman who has failed to find happiness either in marriage or in love. We will return presently to Madame de Stael's endeavours to find happiness in love.

She stayed at Coppet till the increasing bitterness of Napoleon's persecution—he forbade her best friends to visit her—made her life there intolerable. Then she travelled by

[1] Deputy of the Department of the Rhone, and an opponent of the Napoleonic régime. He and Madame de Stael had lived together at Saint Ouen.



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way of Austria to Russia. Her reputation had preceded her. At the inns of the provincial towns in which she rested, the local nobility called to congratulate her on her literary compositions. At Moscow, and at St. Petersburg (where she met such celebrities as the Genevan, J. A. Galiffe,[1] and the Prussians, Stein and Arndt) she was made welcome as Napoleon's enemy. She moved on to Stockholm, where she stayed eight months, and published her *Réflexions sur le Suicide*. In May, 1813, she came to London.

There she was the lion of the season—Lord Byron's rival in public curiosity. His letters and journals show that she was a more formidable rival than he liked. The "polished horde" were never tired of staring at her; they even climbed up on to chairs to get a better view. All the best people were glad to come to her receptions in Argyle Place, Regent Street. The circle of her friends included Lords Byron, Lansdowne, and Holland, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Samuel Romilly, and Samuel Rogers.

In 1814, when Napoleon had gone to Elba, she was once more back in Paris, holding her salon there; the Duke of Wellington was one of those who called to pay her homage. When Napoleon landed in 1815, she was again at Coppet; he did not persecute her during the "hundred days", having plenty of other and more urgent business to attend to; and she was still at Coppet when he was exiled to Saint Helena. Byron visited her there and revised his first impression. She died there, in 1817, in her fifty-second year.

[1] Author of *Matériaux pour l'histoire de Genève*, and *Notices généalogiques sur les familles Genevoises, depuis les premiers temps jusqu'à nos jours*—two compilations very useful to the historian.

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Such is her career—briefly and sketchily summarised. Details can be disinterred in abundance, by those who wish for them, from innumerable volumes of memoirs. There is no room for them here. We can only dwell on two things: on the salon at Coppet, and on the love-stories.

The salon was intermittent—its continuity broken by the journeys to Germany, Italy, Russia, Sweden, and England, and by those raids into French territory which Madame de Stael so often undertook, and from which she so often returned defeated. At intervals, however, she received there—in the house that was first her father's and afterwards her own—from 1794 until her death; and there were times when the public opinion of Geneva considered her receptions scandalous. The citizens were in duty bound to think as well as they could of her, because she was their Necker's daughter, and their Madame Necker de Saussure's cousin. But they felt the strain because her parties were so different from theirs. When they occasionally entertained her, it was with as much pomp and ceremony as if they were holding a military review in her honour. Her Château was more of a Liberty Hall. She received men, after the French fashion, in her bed-room, and habitually addressed many men, whether married or single, by their Christian names. One can readily believe that this practice gave the Genevan gossips something to talk about.

The state of things, indeed, was such as might have set tongues wagging even in our own more tolerant times. To begin with, the hostess was a grass-widow whose husband was generally somewhere at the other end of Europe; and in the second place, most of the women with whom she was

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most intimate were also grass-widows who ordered their lives without any very obvious reference to their husbands: Madame Krudener,[1] and Madame Récamier who travelled under the escort of the Comte de Sabran, and Madame de Beaumont who lived with Châteaubriand (a married man) when that devout author was writing his *Génie du Christianisme*, and Frederika Brun, the Danish artist who lavished upon the philosopher Bonstetten the affection which lawfully belonged to a morose merchant of Copenhagen. Coppet, in short, was, among other things, a veritable paradise of grass-widows, and of the young men (and also the middle-aged men) who admired them. Bonstetten and Frederika Brun always came together. Madame Récamier used to sit out on the balcony coquetting with all manner of people from Prince Augustus of Prussia downwards. Madame de Stael herself was always running after Benjamin Constant, except when he was running after her. When he dropped in to pay an afternoon call, he was often seen to leave the house after midnight. Whence it is clear that Genevan gossip did not rest upon a wholly imaginary basis.

We need not, however, pursue this branch of the subject in an uncharitable spirit. Madame de Stael's receptions were interesting; that is the main thing after all. She received the grave as well as the gay, the moral as well as the immoral, and helped them to appreciate each other's good qualities; the introduction of the moral to the immoral is at least as valuable a service as the introduction of

[1] The Russian novelist and mystic, author of *Valérie*, etc.—the mistress of many men, though she lived with her husband in the intervals of her liaisons.

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the leaders of society to the luminaries of the stage, as practised at the present time. The only people whom Madame de Stael would have nothing to do with, if she could help it, were stupid people; and it would be unreasonable to censure her for such exclusiveness. That stupid people should organise their own salons and be strictly confined to them is a sound principle of social intercourse better observed in the 18th century than in the 19th. For carrying it on some distance into the 19th century Madame de Stael deserves our cordial praise, no less than for her readiness to receive any intelligent person whose intellectual credentials were satisfactory.

The guests amused themselves with private theatricals, with conversation, and, as has already been said, with love affairs. Many of them have drawn the picture of their diversions in letters or in diaries. To quote from these is the only reasonable way to reproduce the picture; though the store is so rich that one hardly knows where to begin, or where to end. Among those whose memory the mention of Coppet conjures up, besides those already mentioned, are included Sismondi, the historian, Prospère de Barante, Prefect of Leman, Werner, the German poet, Karl Ritter, the German geographer, Baron de Voght, the Duchess of Courlande, Pictet, editor of the *Bibliothèque*, and his brother, Monti, the Italian poet, Madame Le Brun, the French painter, George Ticknor, the American traveller, Adam Oelenschlager, the Danish poet, Cuvier, and a whole host of others. From almost every one of them we have some pen-and-ink sketch of the life there.

There is the vignette, for example, of Madame Le Brun, who also painted Madame de Stael's portrait in oil:—

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"I paint her in antique costume. She is not beautiful, but the animation of her visage takes the place of beauty. To aid the expression I wished to give her, I entreated her to recite tragic verses while I painted. She declaimed passages from Corneille and Racine,... I find many persons established at Coppet: the beautiful Madame Récamier, the Comte de Sabran, a young English woman, Benjamin Constant etc. Its society is continually renewed. They come to visit the illustrious exile who is pursued by the rancour of the Emperor. Her two sons are now with her, under the instruction of the German scholar Schlegel; her daughter is very beautiful, and has a passionate love of study. Madame de Stael receives with grace and without affectation; she leaves her company free all the morning; but they unite in the evening. It is only after dinner that they can converse with her. She then walks in her *salon*, holding in her hand a little green branch; and her words have an ardour quite peculiar to her; it is impossible to interrupt her. At these times she produces on one the effect of an improvisatrice."

There is the vignette by the Genevan writer, M. Petit-Senn, who, apparently, was not quite sure whether he ought to be shocked or not. The circle, according to him—

"Presented the aspect of a synod of quite novel character. The different systems of religion were strongly contrasted there. Catholicism was represented by Mathieu de Montmorency, Quietism by M. De Langallerie, Illuminism by M. de Divonne, Rationalism by Baron Voght, Calvinism by the Pastor Maulinie. Even Benjamin Constant, then occupied with his work on Religions, brought his tribute

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to the theological conferences—conferences which borrowed no austerity from the accidents of the time or the place. The conversations at dinner and in the evening were chiefly on religious subjects of the most mystic nature, and were seldom changed even for the news of the day or for brief musical entertainments."

Thirdly, there is the vignette of Baron de Voght—contained in a letter to Madame Récamier, and written quite in the Mainly about People vein. It is, perhaps, the most graphic of all the pictures that we possess.

"It is to you that I owe my most amiable reception at Coppet. It is no doubt to the favourable expectations aroused by your friendship that I owe my intimate acquaintance with this remarkable woman. I might have met her without your assistance—some casual acquaintance would no doubt have introduced me—but I should never have penetrated to the intimacy of this sublime and beautiful soul, and should never have known how much better she is than her reputation. *She is an angel sent from heaven to reveal the divine goodness upon earth.* To make her irresistible a pure ray of celestial light embellishes her spirit and makes her amiable from every point of view.

"At once profound and light, whether she is discovering a mysterious secret of the soul or grasping the lightest shadow of a sentiment, her genius shines without dazzling, and when the orb of light has disappeared it leaves a pleasant twilight to follow it... No doubt a few faults, a few weaknesses occasionally veil this celestial apparition; even the initiated must sometimes be troubled by these eclipses which the Genevan astronomers in vain endeavour to predict.

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"My travels so far have been limited to journeys to Lausanne and Coppet, where I often stay three or four days. The life there suits me perfectly; the company is even more to my taste. I like Constant's wit, Schlegel's learning, Sabran's amiability, Sismondi's talent and character, the simple truthful disposition and just intellectual perceptions of Auguste,[1] the wit and sweetness of Albertine[2]—I was forgetting Bonstetten,—an excellent fellow, full of knowledge of all sorts, ready in wit, adaptable in character—in every way inspiring one's respect and confidence.

"Your sublime friend looks and gives life to everything. She imparts intelligence to those around her. In every corner of the house some one is engaged in composing a great work . . . Corinne is writing her delightful letters about Germany, which will no doubt prove to be the best thing she has ever done.

"The *Shunamitish Widow*, an oriental melodrama which she has just finished, will be played in October; it is charming. Coppet will be flooded with tears. Constant and Auguste are both composing tragedies; Sabran is writing a comic opera, and Sismondi a history; Schlegel is translating something, Bonstetten is busy with philosophy, and I am busy with my letter to Juliette."

Then, a month later:—

"Since my last letter, Madame de Stael has read us several chapters of her work. Everywhere it bears the marks of her talent. I wish I could persuade her to cut

[1] Madame de Stael's son, who afterwards edited the works of Madame de Stael and Madame Necker.

[2] Madame de Stael's daughter, afterwards Duchesse de Broglie.

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out everything in it connected with politics, and all the metaphors which interfere with its clarity, simplicity and accuracy. What she needs to demonstrate is not her Republicanism, but her wisdom .... Mlle. de Jenner played in one of Werner's tragedies which was given, last Friday, before an audience of twenty. She, Werner, and Schlegel played perfectly ....

"The arrival in Switzerland of M. Cuvier has been a happy distraction for Madame de Stael; they spent two days together at Geneva, and were well pleased with each other. On her return to Coppet she found Middleton there, and in receiving his confidences forgot her troubles. Yesterday she resumed her work.

"The poet whose mystical and sombre genius has caused us such profound emotions starts, in a few days' time, for Italy.

"I accompanied Corinne to Massot's. To alleviate the tedium of the sitting, a musical performance had been arranged, a Mlle. Romilly played pleasantly on the harp, and the studio was a veritable temple of the Muses ....

"Bonstetten gave us two readings of a Memoir on the Northern Alps. It began very well, but afterwards it bored us .... Madame de Stael resumed her reading, and there was no longer any question of being bored. It is marvellous how much she must have read and thought over to be able to find the opportunity of saying so many good things. One may disagree with her, but one cannot help delighting in her talent ....

"And now here we are at Geneva, trying to reproduce Coppet at the Hôtel des Balances. I am delightfully situat-

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ed with a wide view over the Valley of Savoy, between the Alps and the Jura.... Yesterday evening the illusion of Coppet was complete. I had been with Madame de Stael to call on Madame Rilliet, who is so charming at her own fireside. On my return I played chess with Sismondi. Madame de Stael, Mlle. Randall, and Mlle. Jenner sat on the sofa chatting with Bonstetten and young Barante. We were as we had always been—as we were in the days that I shall never cease regretting."

Other descriptions exist in great abundance; but these suffice to serve our purpose. They show us the Coppet Salon as it was: pleasant, brilliant, unconventional; something like Holland House, but more Bohemian; something like Harley Street, but more select; something like Gad's Hill—which it resembled in the fact that the members of the house parties were expected to spend their mornings at their desks—but on a higher social plane; a centre at once of high thinking and frivolous behaviour, of hard work and desperate love-making which sometimes paved the way to trouble.

A whole book might well be written on that love-making; but it is only the love affairs of the hostess herself that can profitably be treated here.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE LOVERS OF MADAME DE STAEL—GENERAL GUIBERT—M. DE NARBONNE—CAMILLE JORDAN—BENJAMIN CONSTANT—HER SECOND MARRIAGE WITH ALBERT DE ROCCA

As a girl Madame de Stael was very much in love with General Guibert—warrior and man of letters—as were a good many other women of the period. We have a description of her from his pen, in which he says that "her large black eyes sparkle with the fire of genius, and her ebon locks fall in rich profusion on her shoulders." But this was only the *grande passion* of a schoolgirl for a man who only regarded her as an interesting and precocious child. It came to nothing, and it does not count.

The next lover was M. de Narbonne—Louis XVI's Minister. Madame de Stael fell in love with him quite early in her married life, and he seems to have been of all her lovers the one who made the deepest impression on her heart. She saved his life, at the time of the September massacres, by hiding him in her house, and arranging for his escape to England; she went to England to see him, instead of going home to M. de Stael. But, as Madame Récamier puts it, "M. de Narbonne treated her very badly as successful men too often do." We do not know the details. We can only guess them from *Delphine* and *Les Passions*—the books in which, after her breach with him, Madame de

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Stael deplored her failure to find happiness in love. And we may partly gauge the depth of the wound from the fact that, many, many years afterwards, we find this cry in one of her letters: "He (some friend whom she is praising) has the manners of M. de Narbonne—*and a heart.*"

Then comes Camille Jordan, a reactionary deputy under the Directorate. He lived for some time in her house at Saint Ouen; but he refused, as we have already seen, to travel with her in Italy, in defiance of the conventions. A little later he hurt her feelings further by getting married. One is tempted to wonder whether he showed his wife Madame de Stael's letter of congratulation: "It is quite true that I do not like my friends marrying, but when they do, it would ill beseem the name of friendship were I to refuse to share in their sentiments. I shall try to win Madame Camille, as I tried to win you."

Last comes Benjamin Constant—the best known, and the most interesting of all the lovers.

Benjamin Constant was himself a man of many love-affairs; "Constant the inconstant" was the name that women called him by. He was the son of a Swiss soldier of fortune, and had a cosmopolitan education, at Oxford and Edinburgh, in Belgium and in Germany. In his youth he held the post of chamberlain at the Court of Brunswick, where he acquired distinguished manners. He was brilliant, though shallow, and there was something Wertheresque about him. Like the Count the Narbonne he was "successful" with women; he also resembled M. de Narbonne in treating women badly.

Born in 1767, he was married, in 1789, to the ugliest of

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the Duchess of Brunswick's maids of honour. He said afterwards that he had married her for no particular reason that he could remember, but that his reasons for divorcing her were clear enough. After his separation from her, he consoled himself by an intrigue with Madame de Charrière—a Dutch lady, married to a Switzer, residing at Colombier near Neuchâtel, and known as the authoress of several sentimental novels. It was an intrigue that could hardly have lasted long in any case, seeing that the lady was twenty-seven years older than her lover. As a matter of fact it came to an abrupt end when the lover met Madame de Stael.

The details of that meeting are somewhat singular. Being at Lausanne, Benjamin Constant set out to call on Madame de Stael at Coppet. He seems to have set out on the expedition for no particular reason, but on general principles—from a feeling, in fact, that two such interesting people ought to know each other. It happened that he met Madame de Stael on the road, driving from Coppet to Lausanne. He stopped the carriage and introduced himself. She invited him to get in, and drove him back. Finding his company agreeable, she pressed him to stay to supper with her. He did so, and was further rewarded by an invitation to breakfast with his hostess on the following morning. Such were the simple beginnings of one of the world's famous love stories.

It was to Madame de Charrière herself that Benjamin Constant first confided the impression that Madame de Stael had made upon him. "It is the most interesting acquaintance that I have ever made," he wrote. "Seldom have I seen such a combination of alluring and dazzling

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qualities, such brilliance and such good sense, a friendliness so expansive and so cultivated, such generosity of sentiment and such gentle courtesy. She is the second woman I have met for whom I could have counted the world well lost—you know who was the first. She is, in fact, a being apart, a superior being, such as one meets but once in a century."

Having read that, Madame de Charrière knew that she had passed for ever out of Benjamin Constant's life. His own writings give us a glimpse of the early days of the new intimacy. Two passages from his diary—the second supplementing the first—supply the picture. Thus we read, on one day:—

"I had agreed with Madame de Stael that, in order to avoid compromising her, I should never stay with her later than midnight. Whatever the charm of her conversation, and however passionate my desire for something more than her conversation, I had to submit to this rule. But this evening, the time having passed more quickly than usual, I pulled out my watch to demonstrate that it was not yet time for me to go. But the inexorable minute hand having deceived me, in a moment of childish anger, I flung the instrument of my condemnation on the floor and broke it. 'How silly you are!' Madame de Stael exclaimed. But what a smile I perceived shining through her reproaches! Decidedly my broken watch will do me a good turn."

And on the next day we find the entry:—

"I have not bought myself a new watch. I do not need one any more."

For a time the amour proceeded satisfactorily, no serious

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cloud appearing on the horizon until the death of M. de Stael. Then, of course, Madame de Stael was free to marry her lover, and Benjamin Constant proposed that she should do so. But she would not. One reason was that she did not wish to change a name that her writings had made famous; another—and perhaps a weightier one—that, though she loved Benjamin, she had no confidence in him. "Constant the inconstant" was inconstant still. Though he loved Madame de Stael, he loved other women too; his intimacy with Madame Talma—the actor's wife—was notorious and was not the only intimacy of the kind with which rumour credited him. Altogether he was not the sort of man whom any woman could marry with any certainty that he would make her happy.

So Madame de Stael refused to marry Benjamin Constant; and with her refusal their relations entered upon a fresh and interesting phase. Henceforward the story is one of subsiding passion on his part, and very desperate efforts on hers to fan the dying embers of his desire. Again and again he tried to break with her; again and again she overwhelmed him with her reproaches, and brought him back, a penitent slave, suing for the renewal of her favour. The time when these things happened was the time when her salon at Coppet was at the zenith of its renown. The story is told for us by Benjamin Constant himself, in his *Journal Intime*, a diary not written for publication, but published, long after his death, in the *Revue Internationale*, in 1887.

The tone, at first, is the tone of a man whom lassitude has overtaken after elegant debauchery. Benjamin Constant

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is only thirty-seven, or thereabouts, yet he already feels like an old man, whose powers are failing, who is no longer capable of strong emotion, or even of taking an intelligent interest in life. He writes, in fact, as if he were tired. When something happens to remind him of his old attachment to Madame de Charrière, he writes thus:

"It is seven years since I saw her—ten since our intimacy ended. How easily I then used to break every tie that bored me! How confident I was that I could always form others when I pleased. How clearly I felt that my life was mine to do what I liked with, and what a difference ten years have made! Now everything seems precarious, and ready to fly away from me. Even the privileges that I have do not make me happy. But I have passed the age when gaps are easily filled, and I tremble at the idea of giving up anything, because I feel that I am powerless to replace anything."

He describes, sometimes with a languid resignation, and sometimes with a peevish resentment, Madame de Stael's repeated endeavours to drag him, a more or less reluctant victim, at her chariot wheels. Here is a very typical entry:

"A lively supper with the Prince de Belmonte. Left alone with Madame de Stael. The storm gradually rises. A fearful scene, lasting till three o'clock in the morning,—on my lack of sensibility, my untrustworthiness, the failure of my actions to correspond with my sentiments. Alas! I would be glad to escape from monotonous lamentations, not over real calamities, but upon the universal laws of nature, and upon the advent of old age. I should be glad if she would not ask me for love after a *liaison* of ten years'

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standing, at a time when we are both nearly forty years old and after I have declared, times out of number, that I have no longer any love to give her. It is a declaration which I have never withdrawn, except for the purpose of calming storms of passion which frightened me."

So is this:—

"A letter from Madame de Stael, who finds my letters melancholy, and asks what it is that I require to make me happy. Alas! what I require is my liberty, and that is precisely what I am not allowed to have. I am reminded of the story of the hussar who took an interest in the prisoner whom he had to put to death, and said to him, 'Ask me any favour you like, except to spare your life.'"

And this:—

"A fearful scene this evening, with Madame de Stael. I announce my intention of leaving her definitely. A second scene follows. Frenzy: reconciliation impossible; departure difficult; I must go away and get married."

And this:—

"Madame de Stael has won me back to her again."

Until finally, their relations gradually going from bad to worse, we reach this striking piece of eloquence.

"Yes, certainly I am more anxious than ever to break it off. She is the most egoistical, the most excitable, the most ungrateful, the most vain, and the most vindictive of women. Why didn't I break it off long ago? She is odious and intolerable to me. I must have done with her or die. She is more volcanic than all the volcanoes in the world put together. She is like an old *procureur*, with serpents in her hair, demanding the fulfilment of a contract in Alexandrine verse."



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It was in marriage that Benjamin Constant gradually decided to seek a haven of refuge from these tempestuous passions. But, though he is continually touching on the subject in his diary, he generally refers to it without enthusiasm. Marriage is "necessary" for him; but there are objections to every particular marriage that suggests itself. Sometimes these objections are expressed in general terms:—

"To a party, where I meet several agreeable women. But I am very unfortunate. In the women whom I might be able and willing to marry there is always a something that does not suit me. Meanwhile my life advances."

Sometimes the objections are particularised:—

"Trip to Geneva; called on the Mesdemoiselles de Sellon; saw Amélie Fabry again. She is as dark as ever, as lively as ever, as wide awake as ever. How I should have hated her, if they had succeeded in making me marry her! Yet she is really a very amiable girl. But I am always unfortunate in finding some insuperable objection in every woman whom I think of marrying. Madame de Hardenberg was tiresome and romantic; Mrs. Lindsay was forty and had two illegitimate children. Madame de Stael, who understands me better than anyone else does, will not be satisfied with my friendship when I can no longer give her my love. This poor Amélie, who would like me to marry her, is thirty-two, and portionless, and has ridiculous mannerisms which become more accentuated as she grows older. Antoinette, who is twenty, well off, and not particularly ridiculous, is such a common little thing to look at."

But Benjamin Constant finally decided to marry Madame

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Dutertre. He bought her from her husband, who for a sum of money was willing to divorce her; but it was not without a violent struggle that he tore himself away from Madame de Stael. Let us trace the story of the struggle in his diary. Madame Dutertre, be it remembered, was an old friend:

"Called on Madame Dutertre who has improved wonderfully in appearance. I made advances which she did not repel. The citadel is to fall to-night. Two years' resistance is quite long enough."

"Off to the country with Charlotte. She is an angel. I love her better every day. She is so sweet, so amiable. What a fool I was to refuse to have anything to do with her twelve years ago! What mad passion for independence drove me to put my neck under the foot of the most imperious woman in the world!"

"We are back in Paris. Joyous days; delights of love. What the devil is the meaning of it? It is twelve years since I last felt a similar emotion. This woman, whom I have refused a hundred times, who has always loved me, whom I have sent away, whom I left eighteen months ago —this woman now turns my head. Evidently the contrast with Madame de Stael is the cause of it all. The contrast of her impetuosity, her egoism, and her continual preoccupation with herself, with the gentleness, the calm, the humble and modest bearing of Charlotte, makes the latter a thousand times more dear to me. I am tired of the *man-woman* whose iron hand has for ten years held me fast, when I have a really womanly woman to intoxicate and enchant me. If I can marry her, I shall not hesitate. Everything depends on the line M. Dutertre takes:—

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M. Dutertre, as we have seen, took the line of offering to consent to a divorce provided it were made worth his while to do so. Madame de Stael was more difficult to deal with. The first entry which gives us a glimpse of her feelings is as follows:—

"Madame de Stael is back; she will not hear of our relations being broken off. The best way will be not to see her again, but to wait at Lausanne for orders from Charlotte—my good angel whom I bless for saving me. Schlegel writes that Madame de Stael declares that, if I leave her, she will kill herself. I don't believe a word of it."

Followed by:—

"Unhappy fool that I am; weakness overcomes me; I start for Coppet. Tenderness; despair; and then the trump card 'I shall kill myself.'"

He fled to Lausanne, but—

"What was the good of coming here? Madame de Stael has come after me, and all my plans are upset. In the evening there was a fearful scene, lasting till five o'clock in the morning. I am violent and put myself in the wrong. But, my poor Charlotte, I will not forsake you."

Yet he had hardly written these lines when he had a relapse. Madame de Stael came a second time to Lausanne to fetch him, and we read:—

"She came; she threw herself at my feet; she raised frightful cries of pain and desolation. A heart of iron would not have resisted. I am back at Coppet with her. I have promised to stay six weeks, and Charlotte is expecting me at the end of the month. My God! What am I to do? I am trampling my future happiness under my feet. . . .

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"I receive a letter from Charlotte, who is more loving and more sure of me than ever. Would she forgive me if she knew where I am and what I am doing? How slowly the time passes. Into what an abysm have I not hurled myself! Last night we had a dreadful scene. Shall I ever get out of it all, alive? I have to pass my time in falsehood and deceptions in order to avoid the furious outbreaks which so terrify me. If it were not for the hopes which I build upon Madame de Stael's approaching departure to Vienna, this life would be unbearable. To console myself I spend my time in picturing how things will go if they go well. This is my Castle in Spain. Charlotte finishes her arrangements and makes her preparations secretly. Madame de Stael, suspecting nothing, sets out for Vienna. I marry Charlotte, and we pass the winter pleasantly at Lausanne."

Though this was not exactly how things happened, the marriage was nevertheless speedily and safely celebrated. But alas! poor Benjamin! It was now his turn, in the midst of his domestic bliss, to feel the pangs of unrequited love. Having fled from Madame de Stael, he sighed for her. His diary is full of his regrets. It is:—

"Charlotte is good and sweet. I build myself foolish ideals and throw the blame of my own folly upon others. At bottom Charlotte is what women always are. I have blamed individuals where I ought to have blamed the species. But for my work, and for the good advice that I need, I regret Madame de Stael more than ever."

Or it is:—

"A letter from Madame de Stael from which I gather that, this time, all is really over between us. So be it. It is

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my own doing. I must steer my course alone, but I must take care not to fetter myself with other ties which would be infinitely less agreeable."

Or it is:—

"I have lost Madame de Stael, and I shall never recover from the blow."

And the truth was, indeed, that Madame de Stael had ceased to care, and that another had succeeded to Benjamin Constant's place in her heart.

His name was Albert de Rocca, and he was a young French officer who had been wounded in the Spanish wars. His personal beauty was such that a Spanish woman, finding him left for dead upon a battle-field, had taken him home with her, and nursed him back to health, saying that it was a pity that such a beautiful young man should die. His age was twenty-three and Madame de Stael's was forty-five. But the affection that sprang up between them was deep and genuine. "I will love her," he said, "so dearly that she will end by marrying me." And, when she protested that she was old enough to be his mother, he answered that the mention of that word only gave him a further reason for loving her. "He is fascinated," Baron de Voght wrote, "by his relations with Madame de Stael, and the tears of his father cannot induce him to abandon it."

So she married him, though, for reasons of her own, she insisted that the marriage should be kept a secret. It seemed to her that a young husband would make her ridiculous, but that a young lover would not; very possibly she was right according to the moral standard of the age. At any rate her husband posed as her lover, and in that

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capacity quarrelled with Constant, with whom he nearly fought a duel, and travelled with her to Russia, to Sweden, and to England, and lived with her in Paris and at Coppet. They were very happy. It was at this period, when her fame was at its zenith, that Madame de Stael wrote: "Fame is for women only a splendid mourning for happiness."

But the end was drawing near. Madame de Stael had lived all her life at high pressure, and her health was undermined. A lingering illness, of which the fatal issue was foreseen, overtook her. She struggled against it, declaring that she would live for Rocca's sake. But all in vain. She died in Paris in 1817. Rocca himself, who only survived her a few months, was too ill to be with her. Benjamin Constant spent a night of mourning in her death-chamber. They buried her at Coppet amid general lamentations.

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## CHAPTER XXV

VARIOUS TRAVELLERS—MADAME ROLAND—OBERMANN—CHATEAUBRIAND — WORDSWORTH — BYRON—SHELLEY—THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

THE period of Madame de Stael's salon was also the period at which Geneva began to be overrun with tourists from all parts of Europe. Many notable persons flit across the scene, inviting our attention. Some of them we have already met at Coppet; and there are others, quite as interesting whom we did not meet there.

Madame Roland, afterwards guillotined in the Terror, heads the list. Enthusiasts speak of her as bracing herself by her sojourn among Swiss mountains for the political part that she was presently to play. Be that as it may, she was in Geneva in 1787, and her account of her journey is included in her collected works. It is a poor book, stamping its author as an earnest person rather than as a literary artist. She is continually in a state of burning indignation about matters which were no business of hers. She is "scandalised" because the citizens are able to get on very well without a statue of Rousseau; and she passes the most extraordinary criticisms on the local political situation:—"A democracy engaged in commercial pursuits is a moral contradiction which cannot long continue to exist. The essence of democracy is incompatible with that of commerce; the one necessarily destroys the other."

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Which proves, perhaps, that Madame Roland was a superficial thinker, given to hasty generalisations, and mainly indebted for her fame to her unimpeachable solemnity and the melancholy manner of her death.

While Madame Roland braced herself for the Revolution on Lake Geneva, Etienne Pivert de Senancour fled thither to escape from it. His name was down on the list of *émigrés*; and while heads were falling in Paris, he dwelt in the pine forests above Montreux, and meditated upon the problems of human origin and destiny. He is the Obermann of Matthew Arnold's poems—the Obermann who cries—

"Then to the wilderness I fled.—
There among Alpine snows
And pastoral huts I hid my head,
And sought and found repose.

"It was not yet the appointed hour.
Sad, patient, and resign'd,
I watched the crocus fade and flower,
I felt the sun and wind.

"The day I lived in was not mine,
Man gets no second day.
In dreams I saw the future shine—
But ah! I could not stay!

"Actions I had not, followers, fame;
I pass'd, obscure, alone.
The after-world forgets my name,
Nor do I wish it known."

And so forth. Only it is not quite true that Obermann found the repose he sought in the shadow of the Dent de

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Jaman. Perhaps the fact that he was unhappily married had something to do with his failure in the quest. At any rate he failed in it, and retired to Paris, and became a journalist. "Eternity, be thou my refuge", is the epitaph engraved, at his desire, upon his tomb.

Another sentimentalist of the period who was a good deal at Geneva was Châteaubriand. He represented the French government, at one time, in the Valais; he was one of Madame de Stael's visitors; and he was one of the tourists who visited Mont Blanc. One notes that he set his face resolutely against the growing fashion of admiring the mountains. He is willing to admit that mountains are "the sources of rivers, the last asylum of liberty in an age of slavery, and a useful barrier against the horrors of war", but he protests that these facts do not make them any more agreeable to look at. The mountaineer's attachment to his mountains is merely due, he holds, to the mountaineer's lack of imagination; and he will not allow that the mountains are a good resort for dreamers and philosophers: How can you philosophise where you cannot walk without fatigue, and where the fear of falling down the hill monopolises your attention? In fine:—

"There is only one circumstance in which it is true that the mountains inspire a disregard for the troubles of the earth; and that is when a man retires from the world to devote himself to the religious life. An anchorite who consecrates himself to the service of humanity, or a saint who wishes to meditate in silence upon the greatness of God, may find peace and joy in the midst of the rocky wilderness. But it is not the quiet of the wilderness that

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passes into the soul of the eremite. On the contrary, it is the souls of the saints that exhale serenity in the midst of storms."

Wordsworth should be mentioned next. He came to Geneva, as a Cambridge undergraduate, in the course of a long-vacation walking-tour, in 1791; but there is no record of his adventures and experiences. It is clear from "The Prelude" that his view of mountain scenery was very different from Châteaubriand's. He was not, like Châteaubriand, afraid to philosophise lest he should tumble. On the contrary:

> "Nor, side by side
> Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone
> Each with his humour, could we fail to abound
> In dreams and fictions, pensively composed:
> Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake,
> And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,
> And sober posies of funereal flowers,
> Gathered among those solitudes sublime
> From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,
> Did sweeten many a meditative hour."

"The Prelude", however, does not go into details, and we have no prose account of the journey to turn to. So we pass on to the more famous visit of the two younger poets, Byron and Shelley.

It was in 1816 that Lord Byron, having definitely quarrelled with his wife, left England for ever. He travelled in a huge coach of which we read that "besides a *lit de repos* it contained a library, a plate chest, and every apparatus for dining in it." His route was by way of Flanders

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and the Rhine, and he reached Geneva, attended by the Italian physician, Polidori, and "two girls of suspicious morals". In the circumstances it is not surprising that the leaders of respectable society refused to invite him to their houses; but Madame de Stael, whose views of such matters were rather Parisian than Genevan, invited him to Coppet. "She has made Coppet," he wrote to Mr. Murray, "as agreeable as society and talent can make any place on earth;" and to Mr. Rogers he enlarges:

"Do you recollect a book, Mathieson's Letters, which you lent me, which I have still, and yet hope to return to your library? Well, I have encountered at Coppet and elsewhere Gray's correspondent, that same Bonstetten, to whom I lent the translation of his correspondent's epistles for a few days; but all he could remember of Gray amounts to little, except that he was the most "melancholy and gentlemanlike" of all possible poets. Bonstetten himself is a fine and very lively old man and much esteemed by his compatriots; he is also a "littérateur" of good repute, and all his friends have a mania for addressing to him volumes of letters—Mathieson, Müller the historian, *etc.*, *etc.* He is a good deal at Coppet, where I have met him a few times. All these are well. Schlegel is in high force, and Madame as brilliant as ever."

At his hotel—Dejean's Hôtel de l'Angleterre, in the suburb of Sécheron—Byron met Shelley, who had travelled by way of Paris, Dijon, Dôle, and arrived some days before him. There is some reason to believe that he did not greatly care whether he met Shelley or not, but was very anxious to meet Miss Jane Clairmont, who was travelling with the Shelleys, and had advised him of her movements—the theory

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is borne out by the fact that Miss Clairmont shortly afterwards gave birth to a child, the paternity of which Byron did not deny.

This little *contretemps*, however, by no means disturbed the amicable relations of the poets. They admired each other's poems, and they had a further bond of sympathy in their common disregard of the moral law as conventionally interpreted. They fraternised, they combined to hire a boat; after they had left their hotel—Byron for the Villa Diodati, and Shelley for a cottage called Campagne Mont Allègre—they continued to visit each other daily, or rather nightly, and to sit up late, discussing every subject under the sun. It was there that they read "Christabel" together, and agreed that they would each of them write a ghost story—whence it resulted that Polidori wrote "The Vampyre" and Mrs. Shelley "Frankenstein." It was then, too, that "Monk" Lewis, his feelings having been worked upon by the humanitarian poets, signed a codicil to his will, which they and Polidori witnessed, requiring any future holder of his properties in Jamaica, to reside on the estate for three months in every third year, in order to see that the slaves were properly treated.

One has a very pathetic reminiscence of these midnight debates and colloquies, in Mrs. Shelley's journal. In 1822, soon after her husband's death, she wrote thus:—

"I do not think that any person's voice has the same power of awakening melancholy in me as Albe's. I have been accustomed, when hearing it, to listen and speak little; another's voice, not mine, ever replied—a voice whose strings are broken. When Albe ceases to speak, I expect to hear

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*that other* voice, and when I hear another instead it jars strangely with every association. I have seen so little of Albe since our residence in Switzerland, and, having seen him there every day, his voice—a peculiar one—is engraved on my memory with other sounds and objects from which it can never disunite itself.... Since my incapacity and timidity always prevented my mingling in the nightly conversations of Diodati, they were, as it were, entirely *tête-à-tête* between my Shelley and Albe; and thus, as I have said, when Albe speaks and Shelley does not answer, it is as thunder without rain—the form of the sun without heat or light—as any familiar object might be, shorn of its best attributes; and I listen with an unspeakable melancholy that yet is not all pain."

There were not only talks to be remembered, however, but also trips and excursions. The Shelleys went alone to Chamounix, where Shelley wrote in the visitors' book at Montanvert his famous Εἶμι φιλάνθρωπος δημωκράτικός τ'ἄθεός τε and where he composed his poem "Mont Blanc" as he looked up at the mountains, leaning against the bridge across the Arve. But they took the tour of the lake together with Byron, and were nearly wrecked upon the rocks of Meillerie. "I ran no risk," writes Byron, "being so near the rocks, and a good swimmer, but our party were wet, and incommoded a good deal." Shelley took the matter more seriously. He writes:—

"One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the boat was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering his error, he let it entirely go,

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and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in and then another. My companion, an excellent swimmer, took off his coat; I did the same, and we sat with our arms crossed, every moment expecting to be swamped. The sail was, however, again held, the boat obeyed the helm, and, still in imminent peril from the immensity of the waves, we arrived in a few minutes at a sheltered port, in the village of Saint Gingoux. I felt in this near prospect of death a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately."

The main object of the excursion thus diversified was to identify and weep over the "bosquet de Julie," the rock of Saint Preux at Meillerie, and the other scenes in "La Nouvelle Héloïse." It was the fashion of those days to be moved to tears by the "more than human sensibility," as Shelley styles it, of Jean Jacques; nowadays even a poet is only bored by it. One may note, however, without troubling to quote "Childe Harold," that Byron had his tears under better control, and gave a wider range to his interests than the younger poet. They went to Lausanne together, and visited the summer-house in which Gibbon finished the "Decline and Fall." "My companion," Shelley says, "gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of him. I refrained from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau." So great was still the influence of Rousseau over the sentimentally minded.

Shelley left Geneva for England at the end of August. Byron stayed until October, and then set out for Italy.

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During his short sojourn he had written a Canto of "Childe Harold," and the "Prisoner of Chillon"—a poem which is not the less admirable, poetically, because the poet knew neither who the prisoner was nor why he was imprisoned in the Castle. And he had also set a fashion in foreign travel. After the publication of the "Childe" and the "Prisoner," the Lake of Geneva became a place to which poets instinctively repaired. Southey went there; so did Thomas Moore; so did Samuel Rogers; so did—But to enumerate the poets who have been to Geneva would be as long a task as to enumerate the stock-brokers who have been to Brighton, and not much more profitable. Let us turn, for a change, to a picture of the town and neighbourhood drawn by a British Philistine who passed by a few years after Byron and the Shelleys.

His name was Hogg—Thomas Jefferson Hogg. He was the same Hogg who, at University College, Oxford, had been associated with Shelley in representing that atheism was necessary. He had none of Shelley's love for poetry, however, but settled down steadily at the profession of barrister-at-law. In 1823 he proposed marriage to Jane Williams, widow of the Williams who was drowned with Shelley, who accepted him conditionally on his first going through a sufficient course of foreign travel. He agreed, and went for a walking tour, and on his return put his experiences in a book entitled *Two Hundred and Nine Days, or the Journal of a Traveller on the Continent.* Geneva was one of the places that he passed through. His attitude is that of the average tourist, who is not a poet and does not wish to be. He is for that reason rather

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well worth quoting from. He lodged, it seems, at Sécheron, outside the gates:

"In the evening I assisted at a party in the house of an old maid; my eager desire to see everything in a foreign land had screwed up my courage to this pitch of desperate daring. It was a close and not unsuccessful imitation of an English rout; indeed four-fifths of the company were English, women and boys; there were many whist tables, and a large party at a round game; it was as dull as anything of the kind could be, even in England; and except that the tea was served in coffee cups (a misapplication of those utensils that would have convulsed a body of English tea-drinkers with horror), it was quite perfect. In the midst of these calm and pure joys, I was informed that it was near eleven; I was obliged to run to the gate, and to disburse three halfpence for permission to quit the town....

"I was glad that my visit to Ferney accidentally fell upon a remarkable day, the feast of Saint Remy or Remigius, upon which myriads of hecatombs of pheasants are slain in England in honour of that right reverend saint. I shall always be reminded, by the commencement of pheasant shooting, of an agreeable excursion. With that miraculous want of taste which characterises those persons, in whom living upon alms has extinguished all sense of delicacy, a paper, begging for money to build a reformed church, had been impudently suspended in the very bedroom of Voltaire....

"I was told, but I had no opportunity of witnessing it, that the Swiss Protestants, having remained uncovered during



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the prayers, are accustomed to put on their hats as soon as the preacher commences his discourse; I do not disapprove of the discipline of the Swiss Church in this respect; but I do not think that it goes quite far enough; for when certain of my clerical friends, whom it would be invidious to name, ascend the pulpit, I would most cheerfully not only put on my hat, but I would walk clear away....

"We went to see the library; when you are a hundred or a thousand miles from Geneva, the Genevese boast greatly of their public library, and tell you that it is very fine; when we inquired about it in the city, they said it was small; when we came to the door and asked to see it, they said it was the vacation, and that we could not be admitted. I suppose either it had no existence, or it was not fit to be seen.

"We perambulated the town (Lausanne) which is only remarkable for being hilly; so hilly that no carriages are kept; we walked into a vineyard, and saw men, women, and children gathering grapes; they brought their baskets and emptied them, stalks and all, into a large vat, and a man immediately mashed them with a small wooden pail. The mashed grapes had a nasty appearance, like hog-wash; and they did not seem to be particularly cleanly in their mode of dealing with them: a man who was eating grapes, took the skins from his mouth and threw them into the vat, as being a place held less sacred than the ground.

"The public walk by the edge of the Lake (at Vevey) would be an agreeable promenade, if it had fair play; on the side next the Lake were two rows of lines covered with linen; so that we could see nothing except all the

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sheets, shirts, and shifts in the town, which the barbarians suffer to be hung up to dry there.

"Switzerland is the Scotland of Europe; a land that supplies servants—a land to be boasted of by its inhabitants, and quitted. The Swiss, like the Scotch, are all of good families, and of old families; I should like much to see a person from either nation of a bad family, or of a new family; so all persons who follow that branch of the profession of the law are good conveyancers, however dull they may be; I would cheerfully travel one hundred miles on foot through the snow, in the depth of winter, to look at a bad conveyancer. The quarrels amongst the different cantons are very ridiculous; each petty state will have its separate coinage, to the unspeakable inconvenience of travellers; they cannot agree to have one general money, so cordially do they hate each other.

"The hat of the Pays de Vaud, with a pointed crown like a hock bottle, is ugly; but anything is becoming to a pretty woman. I met a woman in the streets this morning so pretty that I shall never see one of those hats without thinking of her sweet modest look.... As I was returning by the road I heard a female pedestrian ask for some grapes; a bunch was immediately given to her, and when she offered to pay, and inquired 'How much?' the answer was 'Nothing, I am too happy to give them to such a pretty girl.' I waited to see her with some curiosity; she was sadly ugly; but there was more merit on that account in the gallantry of the master of the vineyard. Anyone can admire a handsome woman; but the true benefactor to the public, whose memory is to be cherished, and to celebrate

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whose praises the muses and the fine arts ought to shine with eager emulation, is the man, who during a long life has always been deeply in love, but never with a lady whose aspect would not frighten a tolerably quiet horse.

"The Castle of Chillon is ugly; its whitewashed walls are crowned with a roof of red tiles, and the inscription over the gate, 'Bureau des Péages,' is unfavourable to romance; but its situation is striking—and it might acquire an interest from a tale of a love-sick pirate, or a nervous robber, with a soul trembling through its susceptibilities, like a plate of calf's-foot jelly."

One could quote much more of the same sort of thing if it were worth while. But it is not. What has been cited is enough to illustrate the point of view of the tourists who came to Geneva in the days when the "grand tour" was already a thing of the past, and the personally conducted excursion was still a thing of the future.

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# CHAPTER XXVI

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion we may say a word about the native literary talent that flourished at Geneva during the nineteenth century.

So far, the literary associations, whether of the City or of the Lake, have but seldom been Genevan, or even Swiss. There have been great Genevan names—those, for instance, of Rousseau and Bonivard—but, on the whole, the distinguished residents have been overshadowed by the distinguished strangers, and the most distinguished natives did their best work abroad. But here it is necessary to tread delicately, avoiding alike the danger of neglecting merit, and that of peppering the pages with superfluous and unfamiliar names.

One may begin with Philippe Bridel—more usually known as Doyen Bridel. He lived until 1845; but he was nearly ninety when he died—a last link with the *ancien régime*. He had been introduced by Deyverdun to Gibbon, and had had the run of Gibbon's library. His father had been tutor to Mademoiselle Curchod; he himself had been tutor to Benjamin Constant. He had been doctored by Tissot, received in Madame Necker's salon, and taught to be a man of the world by Madame de Charrière. For many reasons he is one of the most interesting figures in the literary, and even in the theological history of Switzerland. In the main he

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was *Helvetiis ipsis helvetior;* but in some respects he was as little Swiss as any Switzer could be.

He began as a Wertheresque student at the University of Lausanne, where Wertheresque students have not been numerous. He was sad as night only for wantonness. He wrote poetry which would have been saluted as *décadent* if the term had then been in use. Here is a quatrain, rendered into English, which may serve as an example of its tone:—

> Just a few flowers of friendship blow
> To cheer my journey down the years;
> I pluck the flowers as on I go,
> And water them with welling tears.

A walking tour in the mountains awakened Philippe Bridel from this unnatural despondency. His mood, when he returned from it, was one of mingled gaiety and cynicism. He expressed it in poetry which sometimes reminds me of Horace, and sometimes of Herrick, though it is not quite on the same high level. Once more one may venture to illustrate the writer's point of view by a translation. We see Bridel in doubt as to the most desirable disposition of his affections:

> I saw Zalmyra—who was fair to see;
> But ne'er a single spark of wit had she.
> Great was my shame to think it should be said
> That such a silly doll had turned my head.
> Chloe, again, is clever, I admit,
> And brightens conversation with her wit.
> But ah! her features show not any traces
> Of gifts bestowed by Cupid or the Graces.

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On the whole this was a healthier mood than that which had preceded it. But there was a certain lack of finality about it which prevented it from being entirely satisfactory. The poet escaped from it appropriately by marrying, settling down, and living happily ever afterwards. At the same time he got rid of certain religious doubts which had troubled him, by the not unusual device of taking holy orders.

He held cures successively at Basle, at Château d'Oex, and at Montreux. There is no reason to believe that he was anything but an admirable pastor, though it is not as a pastor—or even as a theologian—that he is famous. He certainly looked after the material interests of his parishioners, persuading them to build their houses of stone instead of wood, so that they might not so easily and so frequently be destroyed by fire. But his real renown rests partly upon his wit, and partly upon his patriotism.

Of his wit many examples have been preserved by his biographers. He made a brilliant pun, at the time of the French domination, on the name of a French official called Rapinat,—an official whose methods resembled those of Verres. One may give it in the French:

Le bon Suisse qu'on assassine
Voudrait, au moins, qu'on décidât
Si Rapinat vient de rapine
Ou rapine de Rapinat.

He also shone on the occasion on which some expelled Trappist nuns fled for refuge into his parish. Hearing that they were at the inn, he invited them to the parsonage and entertained them hospitably. The Lady Superior said that,

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if he wished it, she would relieve the sisters from their vow of silence in order that he might converse with them. "Madam," he is reported to have replied, "I have too much respect for ladies who can hold their tongues to avail myself of your permission."

But, though his good sayings were often really good, it is, after all, his patriotism that was the Dean's most important characteristic. He was continually writing throughout nearly the whole of his exceptionally long life; and almost everything that he wrote was written with the design of impressing upon the Swiss the greatness and the unity of Switzerland. His poetry does not count—Swiss poetry very seldom does. His real life's work consists in his long series of papers on Swiss subjects, bound up, periodically, in volumes bearing the successive titles of *Mélanges Helvétiques*, *Etrennes Helvétiennes*, and *Le Conservateur Suisse*. Here are chapters of Swiss history—stirring chapters telling of the deeds of the Swiss in the brave days of Sempach and Grandson, Morat and Morgarten. Here also are extracts from the old Swiss writers—such writers as Conrad Gesner and Josias Simler—translated from the Latin into French, and accounts of journeys through the less known parts of Switzerland, undertaken by the Dean in the pursuit of patriotic knowledge.

"I am," he said, "neither a Zurich man, nor a Berne man, nor a Canton Vaud man, but a Switzer. I am neither a Catholic, nor a Reformer, but a Christian. I am neither democrat, nor autocrat, nor ochlocrat, but patriot in the ancient sense of the word."

It was truly a good and a sturdy profession of faith. One can only regret that, by degrees, his compatriots tired

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of the works in which the faith was manifested. Some objected to them because they did not like their politics. Others—the women mainly—protested that they were dull, and ought to be brightened up with society gossip and fashion plates. At all events they first ceased to pay, and then ceased to be published. But they had done their work for the solidarity of Switzerland, and had enriched the historic sense of many good patriots in Geneva and the Canton de Vaud.

One can trace their influence, direct or indirect, upon a considerable group of writers who gave themselves diligently to historical research. It became the fashion to explore the archives and bring the hidden things of history to light. Grenus-Saladin printed extracts from the proceedings of the Councils of Geneva; J. A. Galiffe collected materials towards the history of Geneva; Jean Picot wrote that history out in three great volumes; G. P. Gaberel wrote of the Geneva of Calvin, of Rousseau, and of Voltaire; Dr. Chaponnière told the truth about Bonivard; Louis Vulliemin specialised in the history of Chillon. Historical Societies were founded at Geneva and Lausanne. The torch was handed on from one student to another. Eugène Ritter and Albert de Montet, among others, are at present holding it aloft. It is only thanks to their careful and industrious investigations that it has been possible to write this book.

Another interesting group is that of the poets—though their poetry, it may be, is less interesting than their personalities.

At first, as we have seen, Genevan poetry was merely the handmaid of Genevan politics; there were very few epics and lyrics, but plenty of satires and squibs. But, under

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the Empire, things began to change, and the scope of poetry to extend. A new school of poets arose, who sang for the sake of singing, and laughed and were gay because laughter and gaiety pleased them—and also because the City was a prey to a gloomy religious revivalism which needed counteracting.

The founder of the school was Jean François Chaponnière. He had been mixed up with the Revolution, and forced to sit on the Revolutionary Tribunal under threat of being tried and shot by it if he did not. During the French occupation he wrote political songs which often caused the prefect to send for and caution him. On the deliverance of Geneva he sang "*Enfants de Tell, soyez lez bienvenus!*" His most famous song—a song which is still famous—is the one which opens thus:—

Qu'il est beau ce mandement
De monsieur le grand Vicaire;
Sa pastorale, vraiment
A tout bon dévot doit plaire,
Car il dit à son troupeau:
"S'il est du mal sur la terre,
*C'est la faute de Voltaire,*
*C'est la faute de Rousseau.*"

Si le diable adroit et fin
A notre première mère
Insinua son venin
*C'est la faute de Voltaire;*
Si le genre humain, dans l'eau,
Pour expier son offence
Termina son existence,
*C'est la faute de Rousseau.*

Chaponnière, however, was not only a poet, but also a

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poetical influence. The young men, his disciples, formed a Club,—the *Caveau Genevois.* There were Thomegeux, Petit-Senn, Tavau, Congnard, Jeremie Subit, Krippendorf, Gaudy-Lefort and many others. Oblivion has been the fate of most of them, because their poetry was not of the sort that the world is very reluctant to let die. But they were the choice spirits of the Geneva of their day—of the years say, between 1815 and 1830. One or two of them have left us word-pictures of the meetings of the Club.

"Our gatherings, to which every member was expected to contribute a new song or a new air, took place irregularly, and in various places. Sometimes we met on the beautiful banks of our lake, at Cologny, on the Terrace of the Hôtel du Lion d'Or. We used to come home arm in arm, larking and singing, good friends and jolly fellows, ready to begin again those charming scenes which politics never troubled, and in which music, poetry, and joy, those crowns of harmony and loyal friendship, reigned alone."

And there is a story of the singer Larivière, who was not satisfied with singing at the Club, but went on singing in the streets, at the dead of night, after the meetings of the Club were over. The citizens complained, and the Syndic sent for him to admonish him on the unseemliness of his conduct. He said the Syndic had better hear him sing, in order that he might be able to judge of the enormity of his offence. The Syndic consented, and when the first song was finished, asked for another, and another, and another. Altogether the singer gave him a concert of two hours' duration, and at the end of it the magistrate shook the minstrel's hand and said—

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"My dear Monsieur Larivière, when the fancy seizes you to sing at night, do not station yourself underneath the windows of the citizens who want to go to sleep. Come under mine instead."

About 1830 the Club broke up. Some of its members were dead, some had left Geneva, some were growing too old for poetry, and some were going in for politics. But as the old school faded away, a new school—the Romantic School—was dawning. The influence of Madame de Stael, strangely enough, had failed to found such a school; but young Geneva, deaf to the voice of a country-woman, listened to the voice of Lamartine, and Charles Nodier, and Victor Hugo. One finds the connecting link between the two groups in Petit-Senn. Having been the boon companion of the classical poets, he lived to be the Mæcenas of the romanticists. A man of reasonable private means, he entertained them at his country house, relieved their poverty, and had their poems published at his expense.

Their names are not very famous; the names of a good many of them have never been known outside Geneva. But they have their importance as the representatives, at Geneva, of a movement that affected all European literature.

First of them in order of time comes Charles Didier. He was private tutor in the great Bonstetten's family, and he founded a Literary Society at Geneva—a thing which probably has never been done by a private tutor in any other European city. He took walking tours in Italy, glorified the carbonari, pictured the meetings of their secret societies in the style of "The Mysteries of Udolpho," and ultimately settled down in Paris to a more or less prosperous literary career.

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A contemporary and friend of his, who was less prosperous but more precocious, was Imbert Galloix. He, too, having published his first poems at the age of 19, went to Paris, but he fell into destitution there. Victor Hugo and Charles Nodier did what they could for him. "I send you," Victor Hugo wrote, "the half of what I have in the house. It is the first time that I blush for my poverty." But he died—a pathetic figure reminding one of Chatterton—at twenty-one.

Next comes Etienne Gide, Professor of Law at the University of Geneva, who deserves to be remembered, if only for these four lines:—

> C'est un frais sentier plein d'une ombre amoureuse,
> L'on n'y passait que deux en se tenant la main;
> Nous le suivions ensemble en la saison heureuse,
> Mais je n'ai plus dès lors retrouvé ce chemin.

And then come Henri Blanvalet, some time private tutor to the Frankfort Rothschilds, and Albert Richard, whose style was such that Bérenger, hearing some of his verses, thought, or pretended to think, that they were translated from the German. None of their names can be said with truth to be quite illustrious. But some of their poetry has the true ring—though for the real French poetry it has always been necessary to go to France—and they stand for the romantic movement at Geneva.

Side by side with poetry, theology was also flourishing at Geneva. The theologians had a firmer hold upon the citizens than the poets; they did not write less well; and the boundaries of their influence were much less circumscribed. At the same time they and the poets had more in common

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than they were aware of; for the theologians, being Revivalists, represented the romantic movement on its religious side. Just as subjectivity in literature spells Romanticism, so does subjectivity in religion spell Revivalism.

Under Calvin and his immediate successors, theology had been in the main a system of religious jurisprudence. By degrees, as the conditions changed, the casuists let themselves loose upon this system of religious jurisprudence, and played havoc with it. Socinianism invaded the Republic and the Academy. The creed of many so-called Calvinists, towards the end of the eighteenth century, did not perceptibly differ from the creed for holding which Calvin had caused Servetus to be put to death. Their sermons were not whole-hearted appeals to the conscience, but half-hearted appeals to the intellect; their schools of theology were little more than schools of rhetoric. A reaction against this state of things had been begun by the Pietists—Fatio de Duillers, François Magny, and Marie Huber—but Pietism at Geneva was more interesting than important. It died out, leaving no trace behind. Then, in 1817, came what is known as the "Réveil."

Réveil is Swiss for Revivalism. The movement was the Genevan analogue of our Wesleyan Methodism—though it did not begin till more than five and twenty years after John Wesley's death. The originator of it was the Scotch evangelist, Robert Haldane. He came to Geneva, made the acquaintance of the theological students, and was surprised and shocked.

"Had they been trained," he writes, "in the schools of Socrates or Plato, and enjoyed no other means of instruction,

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they could scarcely have been more ignorant of the doctrines of the Gospel. To the Bible and its contents their studies had never been directed. After some conversation, they became convinced of their ignorance of the Scriptures, and of the way of salvation, and exceedingly desirous of information."

The young men fell into a habit of dropping in upon Mr. Haldane, at all hours of the day and night, to talk over the mysteries of revealed religion. He decided to organise his efforts for their evangelisation, take them in classes three nights a week, and expound the Epistle to the Romans. His influence over them was the more remarkable because he was, at first, obliged to converse with them by means of an interpreter. And he had remarkable men among his pupils: Adolphe Monod, of Paris, Félix Neff, the Alpine missionary, and Merle d'Aubigné, the historian of the Reformation. A friend, too senior to be his pupil, and already of his way of thinking, was César Malan, the hymnodist.

His teaching was the teaching of the Pietists, the Quietists, the Moravians, the Methodists, and mystics generally. Religion, he preached, did not consist in adherence to any body of doctrine, however admirable, but must be the special experience of the individual soul. There must be an awakening to a sense of sin, and a transition to a state of grace. When he had demonstrated, epistle in hand and finger on the text, to Merle d'Aubigné, that original sin stood not in the following of Adam, but was the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, whereby he was very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own

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nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusted always contrary to the spirit, d'Aubigné said, "Now I do indeed see this doctrine in the Bible." But Haldane retorted, "Yes, but do you see it in your heart?"

The Venerable Company tried to get Haldane banished from the town, and proposed that he should be cited to appear before them and justify his doctrines. An evangelical commentator has justly remarked that it would have been more to the point to cite the Apostle of the Gentiles and reprimand him for writing the Epistle to the Romans; but that is a branch of the subject which we need not follow up. The important point for us is that Robert Haldane stuck to his post with true Caledonian tenacity, inaugurated a new movement, and founded a new school of thought. Among the members of the school who wrote, the majority, as is natural, deserve more praise as our Christian brothers than as men of letters. But some of them have done work which counts in literature as well as in theology.

César Malan counts—not as his admirer, the Rev. Samuel Cheevers, suggests, because "some of his tracts are like 'The Dairyman's Daughter,'" but by reason of his hymns. Such hymns as

> Accourez tous à la bonne nouvelle,
> Car aujourdhui le salut est prêché.

have travelled almost as far as "Hold the Fort," and "Dare to be a Daniel." Their author was also the composer of the music. He had, moreover, a way of putting things poetically—as when he said that "his conversion to the Lord Jesus

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might be compared to what a child experiences when his mother awakes him with a kiss." But he was unduly uplifted by spiritual pride—a weakness which Revivalists and Poets share. This anecdote, recorded by Dr. Cheevers, seems fairly typical of his attitude towards theologians whom he did not believe to be in a state of grace.

"A licentiate of the Church of Scotland was present, of whom Dr. Malan enquired personally if he possessed the love of Christ. The young gentleman opposed the Doctor's views with great heat and argument, and at length begged of him to go into a private room, that they might converse together with more freedom. When they had shut the door, the licentiate proposed prayer. "No," said Dr Malan, "I will not pray *with* you, for I am convinced that you know not the love of Christ; but I will pray *for* you."

Other notable theological writers of the period are Félix Bungener, the author of a standard, though not really very adequate, life of Calvin, and Dr. Gaussen, one of the founders of the Evangelical Society of Geneva, and the Evangelical Theological Seminary, whose *Theopneustia* is an eloquent plea for the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. But the greatest of them all was Merle d'Aubigné.

If circulation be the test of merit Merle d'Aubigné must, indeed, be reckoned the greatest writer that Geneva has produced. His History of the Reformation was, for a long while, the popular history of the subject in all Protestant countries. As early as 1844 no fewer than 75,000 copies of various unauthorised translations had been sold in the United States alone, and various other unauthorised translations were on the English market. Subsequent students



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of the subject have discovered that it is often grossly inaccurate; not truth, but what some loose thinkers call "evangelical truth" being the object of Merle d'Aubigné's pursuit. But it is not, after all, so very much more inaccurate than Macaulay's History of England, and it has many of the qualities that made Macaulay's work popular. It is romantic and picturesque. It permits itself to be read.

Moreover, d'Aubigné became a personage—one might almost say that he became an institution. Evangelical visitors to Geneva—men like Dr. Cheevers and Mr. Spurgeon—went to see him, in much the same spirit in which Roman Catholic visitors to Rome go to see the Pope. He did more than any of his contemporaries to restore Geneva's Protestant prestige. We may take a thumb-nail sketch of him from Dr. Cheevers' pages:—

"The manners of d'Aubigné are marked by a plain, manly, unassuming simplicity, no shade of ostentation, no mark of the world's applause upon him.... His conversation is full of good sense, just thought, and pious feeling, disclosing a ripe judgment and a quiet well-balanced mind.... A childlike simplicity is the most marked characteristic to a stranger, who is often surprised to see so illustrious a man so plain and affable. He is about fifty years of age.

"You would see in him a tall commanding form, much above the stature of his countrymen; a broad, intelligent forehead; a thoughtful, unsuspicious countenance; a cheerful, pleasant eye, over which are set a pair of dark, shaggy eyebrows, like those of Webster. His person is robust, his frame large and powerful, and apparently capable of great endurance; yet his health is infirm. Altogether, in face

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and form, his appearance might be described in three words—noble, grave, and simple."

We must leave the theologians, however, and, passing to Rodolphe Toepfer, salute genius of a very different kind. It was his distinction to be a humourist in a country in which humourists have been rare.

A recent critic has described Toepfer as a sort of Swiss Ally Sloper; but this is superficial. A drawing here and there might suggest the parallel; but that is all that can be said. One might more reasonably describe Toepfer as a sort of Swiss Max O'Rell—with just a dash of Mr. Barlow.

Like Max O'Rell, Toepfer was a school-master, and like Max O'Rell he had a sympathetic appreciation of the peculiarities of the human boy. Of German origin, but born at Geneva in 1799, he studied at Paris, under Gay-Lussac and other tutors. His grandfather was a tailor, his father an artist, and he himself began life as an usher. He married the daughter of a watchmaker, and with her small dowry started a boarding school, which flourished. Pupils were sent to him from many countries, and remained with him in the holidays as well as in term time. In the summer he took them for walking tours in the mountains—a custom which still prevails in the Swiss schools—and explained things to them as Mr. Barlow did to Master Tommy and Master Harry. But he differed from Mr. Barlow in having more of the high spirits of the school-boy than of the pomposity of the pedagogue, and in preserving a keen eye for the humours of the journey.

He drew funny pictures of the funny things he saw, and he scribbled funny letter-press to explain the pictures—

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without the least idea of publishing anything. But he was persuaded to publish, and the gaiety of nations was enriched by the *Voyages en Zigzag*. Their merits as literature may be, and indeed have been, disputed. The fun certainly is sometimes rather childish—grotesque rather than humourous in the best sense of the word. But there is a naive jollity about them—a general absence of self-consciousness—which still attracts, and which was found very attractive at the time of their appearance. They passed through a good many editions. One finds copies easily at the second-hand book-shops, and turns the leaves with pleasure.

Toepfer also had a fine talent as a story-teller. Some of his sets of stories—like *la Bibliothèque de mon oncle*—appeared in the *Bibliothèque Universelle*. Some of them aroused the admiration of Goethe in his old age. Some of them were so extensively plagiarised that he felt constrained to issue a *Petit appel à la délicatesse des Voleurs*. The best known of them are perhaps the *Nouvelles Genevoises*, praised by Sainte-Beuve in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. But the great merit of Toepfer, from the point of view of his countrymen, was that he was content to be a Genevan, and did not want to be a Parisian, author. Most other eminent Genevan writers, like Victor Cherbuliez and Edouard Rod, have been drawn to Paris as the iron to the magnet. Toepfer remained a good Genevan to the last.

"Were I an artist of talent," he modestly wrote, "I would compel myself to seek and find my reputation here at Geneva; and if the need were, I would rather be ranked with the best men here than with the second or third rate men at Paris... Were I the country, I would say to

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artists, men of learning, and all those who are distinguished by their labours and their talents, 'You are my children; find what you seek under your father's roof. A fig for Jules Janin!'"

At the other end of the Lake, in the Canton de Vaud, other literary men flourished. Most of them—all of them, in fact, who are of any importance—were members of the staff of the *Revue Suisse*, the magazine of Lausanne, incorporated, at a certain point in its career, with the *Bibliothèque Universelle* (originally the *Bibliothèque Britannique* of Geneva). Vinet, Amiel, Rambert, Javelle, and Juste Olivier are the names that most loudly call for notice.

Alexander Vinet was the theologian of the group. One may call him the most eminent of Swiss broad churchmen. He had no particular sympathy with the Réveil; he went so far as to speak of certain revivalists whom he had met, as "wandering lunatics." But he took their part when they were persecuted; his view being that the control of the Church by the State was a calamity to true religion. Liberty of religious opinion was, indeed, a personal necessity to him, since he spent a great deal of his time in earnestly and piously whittling away dogmas. Some of his time, however, was given to literary criticism; and he did it well. His influence was not confined to Switzerland. Even Sainte-Beuve confessed himself indebted to him.

Eugène Rambert, however, was the critic *par excellence* of the company. He wrote Vinet's life; he also wrote a series of studies of the national writers of Switzerland; and he once contributed an article to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. This latter feat, however, he regarded as a *tour de force*.

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He did it once to prove that he was capable of doing it; but he never tried again. Like Toepfer, he wished to be Swiss, and did not care to be Parisian; and he knew that contributors to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* are expected to be Parisian and not Swiss.

Emile Javelle, whose posthumous works Rambert edited, was Swiss only by adoption. By birth he was French; but he spent the best part of his life in the Canton de Vaud. He began life as a photographer and was afterwards a schoolmaster at Vevey. In his vacations he climbed the mountains, and he wrote magazine articles about his climbs. After his early death from consumption, his friends made them into a book, to which Rambert wrote a preface. They were found to be prose poems of no ordinary merit. People bought them more eagerly than they usually buy Alpine books. To the surprise of the publishers fresh editions were demanded. An English translation, excellently done by Mr. W. H. Chesson, appeared only a short while ago.

Amiel was a Lausanne professor who was not in any way famous in his life-time. His fame came after his death, with the publication of his *Journal Intime*. English readers know it from Matthew Arnold's eulogy. It is not necessary to add anything here to what Matthew Arnold has said—even though one shrinks from endorsing all Matthew Arnold's praise.

Finally, one may mention Juste Olivier—another Lausanne professor, and a poet—a patriot, like the Doyen Bridel, who made his country the theme of almost all his poems. The tragedy of his life was that, for political reasons into which we need not enter, they turned him out of

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his professorship in 1845. He went to Paris, where he achieved no great success, and was home-sick there for five and twenty years. The Swiss forgot him, and the Parisians did not understand him. But, in 1870, when there was no longer a living to be made in Paris he came home again. One may conclude with the pathetic picture of his home-coming, drawn by M. Philippe Godet:

"He had to live. For three winters the poet travelled through French Switzerland, lecturing, reading his verses, relating his reminiscences, with that melancholy humour which gave his speech its charm. The public—I speak of what I saw—was polite, respectful, and nothing more. Olivier felt almost a stranger in his own country. But he consoled himself, in the summer, at Gryon, 'the high village facing the Alps of Vaudois' which he has so often celebrated. He was to sing, at the mid-August fête, his song to the Shepherds of Anzeindaz. And there they understood him and applauded. He had his day of happiness and glory among these simple mountaineers. He was, for an hour, what it had been the dream of his life to be—the national singer of the Vaudois country."

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